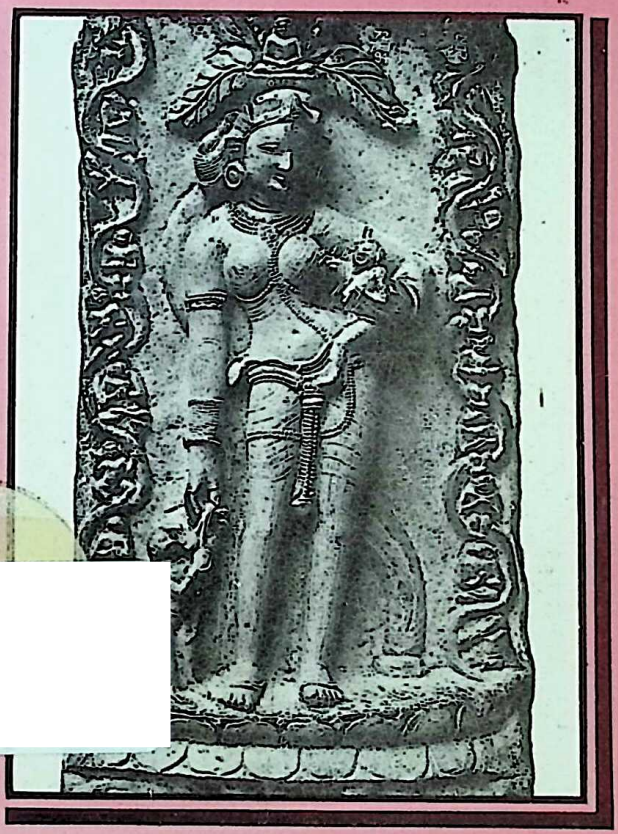
ŚAKTI

AND HER EPISODES

On the basis of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology



DR. PUSHPENDRA KUMAR SHARMA

The book deals with two different modes of manifestation of the external and infinite Brahman as *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* whom the Tantras describe as *Śiva* and *Śakti*, which are as inseparable as heat from fire. Śakti is the divine energy of Brahman who is none other than lord Śiva himself.

The book narrates some important episodes of Śakti handed down to us through the Purānas which in their encyclopedic form have preserved ancient Indian Tradition through the ages.

The book is divided into 27 Chapters which deal primarily with the episodes of Mahiṣa, Śumbha, Niśumbha, Dhūmralocana, Caṇḍa, Muṇḍa, Raktabīja and their slaughter at the hands of Mahāmāyā. The episodes are drawn from Mārkaṇḍeya and other Purāṇas and narrated in the spirit of the original but they are interpreted scientifically by applying critical apparatus which the modern research has provided for us.

In the elaborate introduction, the learned author has traced the origin and development of the concept of Śakti as the divine energy of Brahman, her manifold forms and activities as well as her great plan enforced with the aim of gaining victory over the evil forces. In explaining the Tāntric Philosophy he has come to the conclusion that the Tantras give us a synthesis between the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas by accepting the philosophy of the former and the practical Sādhanā of the other.

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(On the basis of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology)

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PREFACE

Among the different branches of Hindu Religion such as Śaivism. Śāktism, Vaiṣṇavism and Tantrism etc., the one which relates to Śiva and Śakti is the oldest. The nineteenth century excavations at Mohenjodaro and Harappa are illuminating in this respect. No image of God and the Goddess is found among the finds. The only idol of worship explored therein bears similarity with Śiva Liṅga. The terracota figures found in the Indus valley resembles, according to scholars, to the Deity of vegetation i.e. Śākambhari and the female deity in general.

The Śiva and Śakti are the oldest of the deities needs no further proof. References are found even in the hymns of the Ṛgveda. The concept of Śiva and Śakti as inseparable one is as old as the Epics and Purāṇas. These propagate Śiva as *ardha*-nāriśvara—half man and half woman.

But in their functions each is reverse of the other. Śiva is said to be static while Śakti functions as the creative and preservative force which has brought this universe into existence and which preserves it from disruptive forces. The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa recounts her nine forms. Śakti-saṅgama Tantra enumerates ten Mahāvidyās as mother Goddesss viz. Tārā. Śoḍaśī (Tripurā), Bhuvaneśvarī, Bhairavī, Chinna-masta Dhūmāvati, Bagalā (Bagalā-mukhi), Mātaṅgi, Kamalātmikā (kamalā). The Devī Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa mentions one thousand forms of Śakti, each from with a distinct name. Again, the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa personifies the Śakti of each God by the name, Brahmāṇi. Vaiṣṇavī Māheśvarī. Indrāṇī, Kauberī, etc.. but their various forms are distinguished by their different functions, though they are manifestations of one and the same supreme entity : 'एकैवाहं जगत्यत्र द्वितीया का ममापरा ।'

The Purāṇas glorify Śakti in all her aspects, the creative, preservative and destructive ones. She creates, preserve

and destroys the universe. In the process of preserving the universe, the Goddess encounters many obstacles which after a short struggle she overpowers and liquidates root and branch.

The following study recalls the adventures of five chief Asuras who with their mighty force attempted to resist the supreme power of the goddess. They were Madhu, Kaiṭabha, Mahiṣa, Śumbha and Niśumbha. The detailed description of their rise and fall would convince a reader that there were actual skirmishes and fights between Devas and Asuras. The Goddess as the preserver of law and order fought and defeated the Asura forces. though after a hard struggle. But as the following chapters and their exposition will show, the episodes are not so much concerned with the outside world as with the perceptions, conceptions and experiences felt within. The Asuras – Madhu, Kaiṭabha, Mahiṣa. Śumbha ahd Niśumbha – are also symbolical names which represent the forces of darkness, ignorance and delusion whereas Śiva and Śakti are the forces of brightness which by their dazzling rays of light illumine the path of peace, calmness and tranquility. The aspirant who achieves enlightenment after a hard pursuit becomes one with the Supreme Divine Energy.

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INTRODUCTION

The supreme deity of the *Tantras* is known as *Śakti*, inseparable from *Śiva*. *Śakti* and *Śiva* are not two or double stars, but are ultimately one and the same. These are the two[1] modes of manifestation of the external and infinite *Brahman*, as *Puruṣa* and *prakṛti* (but not that of *Sāṁkhya*) i.e. Mother and spirit, whom the *Tantras* describe as *Śiva* and *Śakti*.

Tantras hold that *Śiva* and *Śakti* are inseparable like heat from fire, whiteness from milk, sweetness from sugar, luminosity from light, and weight from natural bodies.[3] It is the *Śakti* in the *Tantras* which is said to have brought the universe into existence.[4]. She governs the universe and overwhelms us with wonder and awe. In other words, it can be said that *Śakti* denotes *Brahman* and His divine energy, glorifying the mother aspect of God.

1. *Śakti* is the reverse of the concept of *Śiva* who is *Sthāṇu* and immovable. In one respect, it is the concept of Divine Energy in its static aspect, motionless, inert, and without agitation, whereas, *Śakti* is the concept of Divine Energy in its dynamic aspect.[5] *Śakti* is the personification of the Divine Energy that has brought this universe into existence; and that preserves it from disruptive forces. In other words, *Śakti* is creative and preservative energy of *Brahman*.[6]

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1. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra. 1.16.
2. D.N. Bose and Haldar, Tantras; Their Philosophy, p. 74.
3. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra –Kālī Khaṇḍa, I. 22; 98.92.
4. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra, 4.10-11.
5. Ibid. 4.34-35.
6. D.N. Bose and Haldar, Tantras, p. 86.

2. *Śiva* is the emblem of the destructive forces that lie dormant in the universe.[1] Goddess *Śakti* is the fullest conception of *Brahman* in all its apects, i.e. as Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer of the universe.[2] Creation is a mode of Divine existence, and Divine energy sustains the universe that binds the atoms with atoms. Again destruction is also an aspect of Divine energy that goes hand in hand with the creative energy. Thus the creative, preservative and destructive forces are but the three aspects of Divine Energy that exists in *Brahman*. *Mahā Śakti* is the complete perception of *Brahman* with the three *Guṇas*—*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, and it is the personification of the creative, preservative, and destructive forces of the universe.[3]

Śakti is also the power of every God like *Indra*, *Viṣṇu* etc,, in other words, she manifests herself as *Śakti*, power, force, or energy in everything and in every being. This universe is the manifestation of *Sakti*.[4] Now this is the concept of *Śakti* conceived in the *Tantras*. A *Śākta* worships *Brahman* as *Śakti* or as He appears through the manifestation of His Divine energy, conceived in the *Tantras* as *Mahāśakti*,[5] God alongwith his Divine energy or attributes (which alone reveal us His existence), conceived as *Mahāśakti* or the fountain head of all energy, is perhaps the most profound philosophical concept of *Brahman*, preached in the *Tantras*.

Kāli, the goddess of the Tantras :

The *svarūpa* of this *Mahāśakti* has been revealed in *Tantric* texts, in the *Dhyāna mantras* of *Kālikā*. The *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* says that She is the great progenitor or the minutest and biggest thing in the universe, pervading both the animate and the inanimate beings. This universe is begotten of Her free will, who is the beginning of all. The *Vidyās* and the

1. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra, 4.33-31.
2, Ibid, 4.35; 5.1.
3. Devi Bhāgavata 1. 2.5-8.
4. Prāṇatoṣiṇī, p. 1079.
5. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra—Kāli Khaṇḍa 2.41; 11

Trinity, all owe their existence to Her. She is cognisant of the entire universe but none in the universe knows Her.[1] She is *Kālī*, *Tārā*, *Ṣoḍaśī* *Bhuvaneśvarī*, *Dhūmāvatī*, *Bagalā*, *Bhairavī*, *Chinnamastā Mātaṅgī* and *Kamalā*. She is surrounded on all sides by the gods and goddesses. She is at the same time the grossest and subtlest matter. She is devoid of all dimensions and yet takes various forms. For the fulfilment of desires of the *Sādhaka*,[2] She assumes various forms. She appears at times to destroy the *asuras*[3] and assumes four hands and occassionally two, six, eight, ten or thousand hands. She wears various weapons for the maintenance of Her World. She is the great Mother. She being propitiated, all the gods and goddesses are propitiated. She is *Ānanda* itself, or a state of eternal bliss which cannot be conceived by mind or words. When *Para Brahman* or *Mahā Kāla* is desirous of creating the universe, the objective world emerges from Him through the centres of realisation or *cakras*. He is ever-existence, pervades all and resides in all.[4] *Mahāśākti* is a *Mahāyoginī* connecting the links of creation, preservation and destruction and at the will of the *Mahākāla*, She creates the universe preserves it and destroys it with all its animate and inanimate objects. The destructive force also is one of Her aspects, as She destroys *Mahākāla* at the time of pralaya, and She is called *Kālī*.[5] She is worshipped as *Ādyā*, being the beginning of all. After *Mahāpralaya* She alone remains as *Tamas* or *Avyakta Prakṛti* in a state, inconceivable by words or mind. Though formless, She assumes various forms; though without beginning, She is the origin of all,[6] and She is said to be the Great Creator, and the Commander of all.

The *Tantras* are unanimous in describing Her, as in a state of eternal bliss and playing in the bosom of *Śiva*[6] Her

1. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 4.10-13.
2. Ibid. 4.16-18.
3. Jñānārṇava Tantra—16.3-30.
4. Yoginīhṛdaya 199, p. 301.
   Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 5.30-32.
5. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra—Tārā Khaṇḍa, 36.19-12.
6. Mahānirvāṇa, Tantra, 4.34.

fect do not rest on anythihg except the breast of *Śiva*.[1] She resides in the cremation ground, where all the worldly objects are being reduced to ashes i.e. their seed stage. By Her independent will she begets universe with all its diversifications, and again sucks them to Her breast in the twinkling of an eye. Unobstructed is Her motion and modification is Her disport. She is black in colour which means that all contradictions like black and white, cold and hoat, possible and impossible, birth and death, merge at Her, feet,[2] and all distinctions disappear. She is sitting on a corpse which means that she exists in all inanimate objects. She has got terrible teeth yet She is conferring boons to all. She is open-mouthed and yet is most affectionate to Her children,[3] bearing as in Her bosom all their belongings, physical, mental, and spiritual. She has a laughing attitude, yet engrossed in wielding the terrible Spirit of Time. She possesses three eyes with which She can peep through the immeasurable Present, Past and Future.[4] She carries in one of Her hands a skull the receptacle of the Unseen and the seed of the universe. She bears in another hand a cutting instrument which breaks the seeds and puts them in full bloom in the form of the universe. Her hair is dishevelled, i.e. She is beyond all bondage and Her outspreading tongue lusciously sucks the blood coming out of some corner of her fearful mouth. She wears a necklace of letters which are not other than the *Mātṛka śaktis*, which constitute the universe and give it a shape, She is also described in a destructive mood standing on the bosom of *Śiva* with a garland of several heads around Her girdle, in the cremation ground resounding with the howling of jackals.[5] She is neither the knower nor the non-knower. She is *Ānanda-*

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1. Yoginihṛdaya 11, p. 128
2. Bose and Halder—The Tantras, p. 202.
   Alain Danielou —Hindu Polytheism, p. 273.
3. Kālī Tantra, p. 71.
   Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 2.4.
4. Alain Danielou, Hindu Polytheism, p. 271.
   also Kāli Tantra quoted in the aforesaid book, p. 462.
5. Śākta Pramoda, p. 27.

mayee where both positivity and negativity meet. *Kālikā* or *Ānandamayee* as She has been called, resides in the heart of *Mahākāla* (the Eternal Time) at Her independent will and appears as *Mahāsarasvati Mahākālī* and *Mahālakṣmī*[1] to fulfil Her sport of Creation, Preservation and Destruction. She herself manifests as these Goddesses and absorbs them in Her at the time of universal dissolution. She is Herself the Maker of the universe and its constitutents.[2] She is therefore worshipped in both the aspects, viz. as the bestower of all possessions of life and also as the mighty *Śaktī* that gives as *Kaivalya*[3] i.e. oneness with *Brahman*. This is all about *Kāli*, the goddess of the *Tantras*.

Daśa Mahāvidyās

The more usual classification of the goddesses, however, is as the *Mahā-Vidyās*. These are held to be ten in number, and the number being probably selected to match the ten chief incarnations of *Viṣṇu*. These are called *Mahāvidyā*, as sources of all that is to be known.[4] These are the most important deities of the *Tantras*. They have all different attributes, and are thus designated.[5] :—

(1) *Kālī* (sometimes called *Śyāmā*), is black in colour, and fierce in character.
(2) *Tārā*, is a benign manifestetion of the goddess.
(3) *Ṣoḍaśī* is the goddess as a beautiful girl of 16 years (also called *Trīpurā*).
(4) *Bhuvaneśvarī*.
(5) *Bhairavī*.

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1. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 4.29.
2. Ibid. 5.137-140.
3. Kālikā Upaniṣad 1.
4. Alain Danielou—Hindu Polytheism, p. 268.
5. For names see Śabdakalpadruma and Tantrasāra, two lists are there—one from Mālinīvijaya and another from Mūṇḍamālā Tantra.
   See also Śaktisaṅgama Tantra—Sundarī Khaṇḍa 1. 101-102. In this list there are some changes.

(6) *Chinna-mastakā*, a naked goddess holding in one hand a bloodstained scimiter and in the other she owns her headless trunk.

(7) *Dhūmāvati*,

(8) *Bagalā or Bagalā-mukhi*

(9) *Mātaṅgi*.

(10) *Kamalātmikā ar Kamalā*.

Of these the first two are especially the *Mahāvidyās*, the next five are the *Vidyās*, and the last three *siddha-vidyās*. We have already discussed the chief of the *Mahāvidyās*, viz. *Kāli*. Now we give a brief description of the other *Mahāvidyās* in the above-said order.

Tārā:

In the *Tantras* she is a goddess, who leads to the other shore. She has a dual aspect, the one fierce and the other pacified and luminous. She is also worshipped in Buddhism. She is of dark blue complexion whereas *Kālī*, already mentioned is of dark colour.[2] Tārā places her left leg on the breast of *Śiva* who is lying like a corpse. She is of short stature as dressed in tiger skin. She wears on her neck a garland of several human heads. She is in the prime of her youth and is adorned with *pañcamudrās*. She is possessed of four hands and her tongue is held out a bit and wears single brain of matted hair on her head.[3] The Ṛṣi Akṣobhya resides in her forehead. Her complexion is as effulgent as that of the newly rising sun. She is three-eyed and stands in the midst of a funeral pyre[4] and the range of her teeth seems to be terrible. She is laughing, engrossed in her emotion, and is decked with ornaments worn by the women. She takes her stand on a white lotus in the midst of a wide expanse of water.[5]

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1. Alain Danielou – Hindu Polytheism, pp. 275-277.
2, Prāṇatoṣiṇī p. 723
3. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra – Kāli Khaṇḍa 2.37.39.
4. Tārā Tantra—quoted in Kalyāṇa—Śaktyaṅka, p. 224.
5. Kalyāṇa 'Śaktyaṅka', pp. 224-226.

Ṣoḍaśī

She is the third *Mahāvidyā*,[1] and is as resplendant as the newly rising sun. She is also three-eyed and holds in her four hands noose, goad, arrow and bow. She is seated on a pedestal comprising of *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu*, *Rudra*, *Iśvara* (*Īśa*) and *Sadāśivā* and the alter on which she takes her seat is *Śiva* him self. On the altar is *Mahākāla* with whom *Mahāvidyā* sports in joy. She, the goddess of sixteen, is the power of *Śiva* and is ruling over the three worlds, She is identified with *Tripurasundari*[2] also.

Bhuvaneśvarī :

She as the fourth *Mahāvidyā*, is considered to be the consort of *Śiva*. She takes care of the three worlds and feeds them that is why she is called *Bhuvaneśvari*[3]. Her marvellous radiance illumines the universe. The fruit in her hand shows her as the giver of the fruit of actions. She possesses a crescent on her forehead and crown overhead. Her breasts are full and surcharged with milk. She is there-eyed and her face is ever it up with smile. In her first two hands she holds the nose and the goad and in the other two the pose of granting boons and (varada) assurances to her devotees.[4]

Bhairavī or Tripura Bhairavī :

The fifth *Mahāvidyā*[5] *Bhairavī* is reddish like the morning sun. She is dressed in a silken cloth and wears a garland of heads on her neck. Her breast is anointed with *Sindūra*. In her four hands she holds a rosary of beads, a book, the pose of granting boons and assurances. She has a crescent on her forehead. Her three eyes are as beautiful as red lotuses, and there is a bejewelled crown over her head.[6] A mild smile

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1. Alain Danielou—Hindu Polytheism, p. 464
2. Śākta Pramoda, pp. 176-178, 180-181.
3. Alain Danielou—Hindu Polytheism, p. 279.
4. Ibid, p. 464.
   Śākta Pramoda, pp. 203, 207.
5. Bose and Haldar, The Tantras, p. 206
6. Śākta Pramoda, 260.

plays on her lips.[4] As a goddess she is *Tripura Bhairavi* while as a *Mahāvidyā* she is designated as *Bhairavi* only. This is a beningn manifestation of *Śakti* and is considered as the giver of knowledge.[1]

Chinnamastā :

The *Sādhaka* should concentrate his mind on a pure and fully blown lotus in the region of the navel. Within it is the solar region as red as hibiscus and surrounded by three lines, viz., *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*.[2] Within that region is the goddess *Chinnamastā*, who is as effulgent as millions of the Suns together. Her mouth is expansive, terrible to look at, with tongue emitting out. The Goddess is drinking the blood that gushes forth from her throats. Her hair is dishevelled and beautified with many varities of flowers. In her right hand she holds a cutting instrument and wears a garland of human heads. She is naked and fearful in appearance. Her right leg is in front while her left leg is little behind.[3] The Goddess *Chinnamastā* wears a garland of bones and a serpent in the shape of a sacred thread. She stands on a standing posture of *Ratī* and *Kāma* who are in the attitude of sexual embrace.[4] Her appearance is that of a woman of sixteen years with heavy and rising breasts. On the left and right hand side of the Goddess are two *nāyikās* called *Dākinī* and *Barṇinī*[5]. They also drink blood streaming out of the Goddess. *Barṇini* is red in complexion, naked and with dishevelled hair. In her left hand is the severed head of a man, in her right hand a cutter and she wears a sacrificial thread made of a serpent. She is of a glowing splendour. She is also of sixteen years of age and bedecked with various ornaments and a garland of bones. The effulgence of *Dākini* on the left side of the goddess is like that of the sun at the time of termination of the *Kalpa*, resplendent like

1. Śākta Pramoda, p. 262.
2. Ibid, p. 228.
3. Ibid, p. 25
4. Ibid, p. 227.
5. Ibid, p. 229.

fire, and her matted hair sparkle like lightning. This *Dākinī* is of three eyes,[1] her rows of teeth are white, of terrible face, in view of her frightful teeth and her breasts are heavy and prominent. This *Dākinī* is of very fearful countenance, of dishevelled hair and naked. Her protruding tongue is big. She puts on a garland of human heads on her neck, and holds a human skull in her left hand and a cutter in her right hand. She also quaffs blood gushing out in another stream from the neck of the Goddes. Both *Barṇinī* and *Dākinī* are serving the great Goddess.

Dhūmavatī :

Dhūmavatī is pale in complexion,[2] ever moving, stern and of tall stature. Her cloth is also dirty, her hair disorderly and colourless. She is without teeth and her breasts are hanging. She is in the garb of a widow[3] and rides a chariot over which sits a crow. Her two eyes are stern without sight of tenderness. In one of her hands she has a winnowing fan and her other hand is in the attitude of granting boons. Her nose is big, and the body and eyes crooked.[4] She is affiicted with hunger and thirst, of terrible mien and of quarrelsome nature. She is the goddess of poverty, frustration, despair and is generally identified with misfortune.[5]

Bagalā :

The Goddess *Bagalā*[6] is seated on a throne, placed on an alter beset with gems, in a *maṇḍapa* bespangled with gems and in the midst of an ocean of nectar. She is of yellow countenance and puts on a yellow cloth and is tongue of the enemy in her left hand, belabours him with a mace taken up in her right hand. She has two hands and is covered all over in yellow.[7]

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1. Śākta Pramoda, p. 229.
2. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra—Tārā Khaṇḍa, 30.23-20.
3. Toḍala Tantra, Paṭala I
4. Alain Danielou, Hindu Polytheism. p. 465.
5. Śākta Pramoda, pp. 281, 287-288, 290.
6. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra—Tārā, Khaṇḍa 30.25-26.
7. Śākta Pramoda, pp. 307, 309. 310-311.

Mātaṅgi :

The Goddess is of dark complexion[1] with a crescent on her forehead, and having three eyes. In her four hands she holds the sword, *Kheṭaka*, noose and goad. The Goddess is seated on a throne made of precious stones.

Kamalā :

The complexion of the Goddess is as bright as gold.[2] Four elephants resembling four hillocks of gold are coronating the Goddess by holding four pitchers containing nectar with their trunks. In her four hands she holds two lotuses and shows postures of granting boons and assurances. Her head is decked with begemmed crown. She is wearing a silk cloth and is seated on a lotus.

Each of the goddesses worshipped by the *Śāktas* has a *Yantra*, assigned to her, which is sometimes placed in the centre of a lotus-diagram. The *Śri-cakra* is a principal *Yantra*[3] delineated in a diagram of this kind and then worshipped. It is supposed to represent the orb of the earth, nine triangles 'being drawn within the circle to denote the nine continents. In the centre is the drawing of a mouth, which is believed to typify the female energy (*Śakti*) presiding over the circle. According to some authorities, even the *Śaṅkrācārya* was a *Śakti* worshipper as he is known to have placed a representation of *Śri-cakra* in each of the four monastries fyunded by him and *Śri-Cakra* has also been described in his *Saundarya Lahari*.[4]

The *Yantras* or mystic diagrams are thought to be quite effective[5] in her operation like the *Mantras*, and of course a combination of both is held to be absolutely irresistible.

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1. Śākta Pramoda, pp. 335, 337.
   Śaktisaṅgama Tantra—Tārā Khaṇḍa. 30.22b-23.
2. Ibid. pp. 355; 357; 361.
   Śaktisaṅgama Tantra—Tāra Khaṇḍa 30.21-22a.
3. Alain Danielou—Hindu Polytheism, p. 359.
4. Saundarya Lahri, V. 11. p. 52,
   ed. Norman Brown Harvard University Press.
5. J. Woodroffe, Śakti and Śākta, p. 513.

Salvation and supreme felicity in a future state is obtained by drawing a six-sided or eight-sided diagram and writing a particular *Mantra* underneath. Triangular, pentangular, and nine-triangled *Yantras* are equally efficacious.

Kuṇḍālini Śakti Yoga :

According to *Śivasaṁhitā* there are four kinds of *Yoga* : *Mantrayoga*, *Haṭhayoga*, *Rājayoga*, and *Layayoga*. The Yoga through the rousing of *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* is *laya Yoga*. It means the piercing by the *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* of the six bodily centres or *Cakras* (also called *Padmas*-lotuses).[1]

Yoga means that process by which the human spirit (*Jīvātmā*) is brought into near and constant communication with, or is merged in the Divine (*Paramātmā*) as the nature of human spirit is held to be separate from (*Dvaita*, or *Viśiṣṭādvaita*) or one with (*Advaita*) the spirit. The *Śāktas* are *Advaitavādins*[3] and according to them, identity of the two *Jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*) is to be realised by the Yogi.

Kuṇḍalinī, as Śabda Brahman :

All the *Mantras* are supposed to be the manifestations of *Kula Kuṇḍalinī*, which is a name for the *Sabda Brahman* or *Saguṇa Brahmàn* in individual bodies. *Kuṇḍalinī* believed to be in the *Mūlādhāra-Cakra*[3] (or basic bodily centre) is the cause of sweet, indistinct, and murmuring *Dhvani*, which is compared to the humming sound of a black bee. Thence *Śabda* originates and being first i.e. *Parā* gradually manifests as upwards as *paśyantī*, *Madhyamā*, and *Vaikharī* (the spoken speech).[4] The substance of all *Mantras*, being manifestation of *Kuṇḍaliṇī*, is consciousness

1. Śiva Saṁhitā V. 14
2. Campbell (J), Philosophies of India, p. 570.
3. Śāradā Tilaka I, p. 12.
   Mātṛkābheda Tantra 3.4.
4. Yoginihṛdaya 1.36-38: 40.
   Vākyapadiya—Brahma Khaṇḍa 144.
   Śivadṛṣṭi—2.1-2.
   Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya, 8. p. 18.

(*cit*)), manifesting as letters and words. The letters of the alphabets, are called *Akṣaras* because they are the diagrammatic representation, or *Yantra* of the *Akṣara*, i.e. Imperishable *Brahman*. This is realized, however, when the *Sādhaka's Śakti* generated by *Śādhanā* is united with *Mantra Śakti*. The different aspects of *Devatās* as presiding deities of *Mantras* are the manifestation of the gross (*sthūla*) form of *Kuṇḍalinī*,[1] who is however extremely subtle. *Mantras* and *Devatās* are thus one and are particular forms of *Brahman* as *Śiva Śakti*.[2]

Nāda-Bindu Kalā :

From the *Sakala Parameśvara*, who has been produced from *Saccidānanda*, issued *Sakti*; from *Śakti*. came *Nāda*.,[3] and from *Nāda* issued *Bindu*, the letter being perfected out of *Ardhachandra* issuing out of *Nāda* and becoming slightly operative towards 'speakable' (*Vācya*). The *Bindu* becomes threefold as the *Kāmakalā*, or creative will. This triangle of Divine Desire i.e. *Kāmakalā* is personified as the Great *Devī Tripura Sundarī*.[3]

Six Cakras :

Out of the six bodily *cakras*; five lower ones are situated within the spinal cord, a compound of grey and white brain nerves. *Mūladhāra* is the lowest in the terminal, and in a midway position in the perineum between the root of the genitals and the anus. Proceeding upwards and controlling genitals is the *Svādhiṣṭhāna*, controlling the navel region i.e. Abdomen is Maṇipūra, controlling the heart is *Anāhata* and controlling the throat-larynx is *Viśuddha*. Between the eyebrows is *Ājñā*, the sixth *Cakra*, and above them all in the cerebrum is *Sahasrāra*, a thousand-petalled lotus, and the highest centre of manifestation of Consciousness in the body.[5]

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1. Prāṇatoṣiṇī, p. 76, 299.
2. Jñānārṇava Tantra 13.46.
   John, Woodroffe, Śākti and Śākta, p. 471.
3. Jñānārṇava Tantra 10.1-7
   Śāradātilaka 1.7.
4. Ibid. 10.8.
5. Prāṇatoṣiṇī, p. 851-857.
   Bose and Haldar, The Tantras, p. 184.

These six *Cakras* or lotuses have respectively four, six, ten twelve, sixteen and two petals which are configurations made by the position of *Yoga-Nāḍīs* at any particular centre. These *Nāḍis* are not those, which are known to the *Vidyās* or the medical *śāstras*, but these are subtle channels (*Vivara*) alongwith the *prāṇic* current flows. The six *cakras* have their correspondences in physical body in the following nerve plexuses commencing from the lowest, the *Mūlādhāra*[2] : The Sacrococcygeal plexus, the Sacral plexus, the Solar plexus (which forms the great junction of the right and left chains *Iḍā* and *Piṅgalā* with the cerebro-spinal axis) and connected with this is the Lumbar plexus. Then follows the Cardiac plexus (*Anāhata*), Laryngeal plexus and lastly the *Ājñā* or cerebellum identified by some with the spineal Gland, the centre of the third or spiritual eye. It has two lobes and above this the *Manas Cakra* or sensorium consists the *Soma Cakra* the middle Cerebrum and lastly the *Sahasrāra*, the upper Cerebrum. To a great extent these localizations are yet tentative. The six *Cakras* themselves are vital centres of consciousness, with the spinal column.

Samādhi :

The practitioners of the *Yoga* hold that it is higher than any other system and that Samādhi (ecstasy) attained thereby is more perfect. The *Samādhi of Laya-Yoga*, however, is said to be *Savikalpa Samādhi*, and that of *Rāja-Yoga* is *Nirvikalpa Samādhi*.[3] In *Yantrayoga*, worship and devotion predominate and in the *Samādhi* of *Mantrayoga* the state of *Mahābhāva* is attained, marked by immobility and speechlessness.[4] While in *Haṭhayoga*, contemplation is made on the Light.

In *Haṭhayoga*, when, *Samādhi*, called *Mahābodha* is attained; respiration ceases and the *Yogi* is without any sign of

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1. J. Woodroffe, ; Śakti and Śākta, p. 410.
2. Ibid.
3. Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā VI. 17.
4. Ibid I.121-122

animation.[1] In *Layayoga* when the *Samādhi* called *Mahālaya* attained; there is no outer consciousness but the *Yogi* is immersed in the Ocean of Bliss. In *Rājayoga* when *Nirvikalpa Samādhi* is attained; there is similarity detachment (*Vairāgya*) from the world.

Mukti :

Not only the *Mantra Yogi* but also the *Haṭhayogi* avails himself of the *Kuṇḍalīyoga* for Liberation. The remaining two *Rājayoga* or *Jñānayoga* are termed as *Dhyānayoga*.

Thus there are two main lines of *Yoga*, namely *Dhyāna* or *Bhāvanāyoga* and *Kuṇḍalīyoga*. In *Dhyāna Yoga*, *Samādhi* is attained through detachment from the world and meditation leading to cessation of all the mental activities or the uprising of pure consciousness unhindered by the limitations of the mind.[2] This meditation is sometimes aided by auxiliary process of *Mantra* or *Haṭhayoga*. (other than the rousing of *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti*) The degree to which the unveiling of consciousness is effected, depends upon the meditative powers (*Jñāna Śakti*) of the *Sādhaka*, and the extent of his detachment from the world.[3] Here is no rousing and union of *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* with the accompanying bliss and acquisition of special powers (*Siddhi*). In both the *Yogas* bodily consciousness is lost, but there being no union of the central bodily powers with the supreme consciousness, the *Dhyānayogi* does not possess the particular kind of enjoyment (*Bhukti*). There is certainly a difference between the *Bhukti* of the *Divyayogi* and the *Vīrasādhaka*, the latter has only a reflection of the bliss on the physical plane—a welling up of the true Bliss through the deadening coverings and trammels of matter. The so-called *Mukti* of the *Vīrasādhaka* is only figurative. It is the *Divya-yogī* only who has both; *Bhukti* and *Mukti*.[4] in his hand.

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1. Mātṛkābheda Tantra 8.25-26.
2. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 15.109-110.
3. Ibid. 14.112-114.
4. Ibid. 1.55; 4.39-43.
   J. Woodroffe—Śākti and Śākta. p. 499.

Pañca Tattvas or Makāras :

Generally, it is thought that in *Vāmacāra*, woman plays an Important roll. But this is only partially true in the case of those *Sādhakas*, who worship *Śakti* according to *Vāmācāra* rites. But amongst the *Vāmācāris* there are even *Brahmacāri Sādhakas*, and followers of the *Nāthas* who never indulge in this type of *Śakti*-worship. *The Kālamukhas* and the *Kālavīras* worship the *Kumāris* only upto the age of nine and the *Brahma-Kaulas* refrain even from wine and meat. Now this means that this kind of worship is restricted to one section of the *Vāmācāris* namely the *Vīra* class[1] while the *paśu* and *Divya* classes are prohibited performing it. There are still further restrictions that a *Sādhaka* should perform this worship with his own wife (*Svakiyā Śakti*) and it is only in the case when there is no wife that he may take some other *Śakti* for the purpose of ritual worship only.[2]

About the use of five *Makāras* in the worship, we can very well say that it is a continuation of ancient usage and not a modern introduction. The *Tāntrikas* have advanced an argument about this *Pañca Tattva Sādhanā*, that Siddhi can be attained by means of those very things which are the causes of men's downfall.[3] The *Tantra* says that the *Pañcha Tattva* are of various types, viz. of real (*Pratyakṣa*) type, substitutional type (*Anukalpa*) and esoteric (*Divya Tattva*) type. As regards the second even a vegetarian would not object to 'meat' which is in fact ginger and coconut water for wine.[4] As for the Esoteric *Tattvas* they are not material articles or practices, but the symbols for Yogic processes.[5] In case of the first i.e. the real *Tattvas*,

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1. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 1.57; 51-56.
2. Ibid. 6.14.
   M.B. Jhaveri—Critical and Comparative Study of Mantra-śāstra, p. 57-58.
3. Kulārṇava Tantra V. 68.
4. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra —Kālī Khaṇḍa, 9.16.33.
5. Ibid. 9.16-17.
   Prāṇatoṣiṇī, p. 1049.

the *Tantras* contain injunctions against unrestrained indulgenece in flesh, wine and woman.[1]

A *Sādhaka* is to practise these rites. for gaining the highest object, namely the unification with *Śiva* or God, leading to emancipation. These are considered to be the initial steps leading towards the final goal. The expression *Pañca Makāras* derives its name from the initial letters of the ingredients used in Tantaric form of worship. This Particular sect of the Tantrikas, holds that these *Pañca Makāras* constitute the very life of the *Tantras*, without which they cannot achieve the spiritual end.[2]

Though outwardly these rites appear much abhorent, yet there is a great esoteric meaning behind these. All these wine, meat; fish and women are objects of temptation and it is very difficult to overcome them. Worship of a young damsel as a goddess, and taking of wine for the purpose of concentrating his mind on the object of devotion only, is something very difficult, and requires the training of the mind. The devotee here has to relinquish his own desire and self and convert the various pursuits of enjoyment into instruments of spiritual discipline.

In case you have to take these in reality, the *Tantras* have prescribed the *Śodhana* ceremony which means the purification of all these five ingredients, before a devotee offers these to the deity or he partakes himself. The *Tantras* deal in detail about the purification of the *Makāras*[2] as well as of the heart of the *Sādhaka*. As we cannot offer anything with an impure heart to the deity, who is the object of our devotion, so we must purify everything and offer it without any selfish desire.

Esoteric meaning of the five *Makāras is like this* :—

1. *Madya* – the nectrine stream that issues from the cavity of brain, is called *Madya* or wine.[4]

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1. Kulārṇava Tantra : 2.117-18.
   Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 6. 13-16.
   Prāṇatoṣiṇī, p. 1050.
2. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra, Kāli Khaṇḍa 9.18.
3. Prāṇatoṣiṇī Tantra p. 1042.
   Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 6.1-16.
4. Prāṇatoṣiṇī Tantra, p. 1041.

2. *Māṁsa* : By this term we mean the control of speech-which is only possible in case of the *Yogis*.[1]

3. *Matsya* : By fish we mean the system of respiration, drawn in and sent out. So the worshipper of fish means one who has controlled his vital breaths, this is called *Prāṇāyāma*.[2]

4. *Mudrā* : It means the Residing place of soul in the body and one who acquires the knowledge of this charming soul is the worshipper of *Mudrā*.[3]

5. *Maithuna* : The most important of all these is the practice of *Maithuna*. It is observed like this : "Co-habitation is at the root of creation, preservation and destruction : It is regarded as a great principle in scriptures and it achieves all ends and confers the most difficult knowledge of *Brahman*.[4] The meaning of *Maithuna* here is the recitation of the various attributes of Cod, or unification with the God.

Thus we can say that this *pañca-makāra* worship is not at all corrupt in spirit as it is supposed to be. The object is very high and these are 'various instruments of spritual discipline.[5]

Philosophy of the Śākta Tantras :—

The *Śākta Tantras* hold that the Supreme Reality is *Parā Śakti*. That *Śakti*, before the manifestation of the universe and the Souls, remains in a state of Quiesence or Repose, devoid as it were of the light of self-reflection implied in the nature of *Caitanya*.[6] The unmanifest universe remains then absorbed in *Caitanya*. This pre-creative state of Supreme *Śakti* is beyond the so-called *Parā Vāk* of the *Yogins*, which is

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1. Prāṇatoṣiṇī, p. 1042. Āgamasāra.
   Chakaravarti, C., The Tantras, p. 41.
2. Āgamasāra.
3. Ibid.
4. Prāṇatoṣiṇī Tantra, p. 1343.
   Dikshitar, Lalitā Cult, p. 79.
5. Ibid., p. 982.
   Chakravarti C, The Tantras –Studies of their religion and literature, p. 42.
6. Saraswati Bhawan Studies, Vol. X.: p. 22.

the universal Matrix and from which the Vedas and the worlds emanate.[1]

This transcendental *Śakti* is co-eternal and cosubstantial with *Para Brahaman* which is ineffable, indescribable, unlimited and immeasurable.[2] Only with the grace of the causal *Śakti* or Mother of the worlds, this above-said transcendent state can be reached. Hence, the *Tantras* say that every form of spiritual discipline is a sort of propitiation of the universal power.[3]

The *Parā Śakti* on this eternal plane has an eternal vision of this eternal universe, not as an object outside of itself but as its very self. This eternal vision is therefore a selfvision of *Śakti* beyond the limitations of time, space and causality and is a state of Perfect Quiet and Peace. The *Parā Vāk* or *Parā* is synonymous with the equilibrium of *Śiva* and *Śakti*.[4] The Supreme *Śakti*, as one with *Śiva*, transcends all *Tattvas* and as differentiated from is the source of all *Tattvas* and is identical with them. In its later aspect it is the eternal matrix of the world and is the Essence of Joy.[5]

Hence, the *Śakti* has a double aspect; and in one it is identical with *Śiva*.[6] At this stage *Śiva* alone shines. There is another aspect, in which the *Tattvas*, the universe made of the *Tattvas* and the *Devatās* from emerge it, both simultaneously and successi vely.[7] Śaktism advocates a position intermediate between absolute monism and qualified monism. *Śiva* is the static Absolute, *Śakti* is the conscious energy of *Śiva* who creates the world through *Śakti*.[8]

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1. Vākyapadīya of Bhartṛhari, pp. 1-6 Part I, Brahmakāṇḍa
2. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra, 3.6-9.
3. Saraswatī Bhawan Studies, Vol. X, p. 23.
4. Prapañcasāra Tantra, 2.43.
   Brahma (N.K.), Ibid., p. 286.
5. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra; Kālikhaṇḍa 1.98-99.
6. Ibid. 1.102-103.
7. Saraswati Bhavana Studies, Vol. X, p. 29.
   Śaktisaṅgama Tantra, Kālikhaṇḍa, 1.112-116.
8. MahānirvāṇaTantra 4.25-29.

Śiva and *Śakti* as *Brahman*, are inseparable and non-different from each other :[1] *Śakti* is the supreme energy (*Parā Prakṛti*) of Śiva, the supreme self.[2] It is conscious, omniscient and the fountain-head of all powers.[3] It is the source of all knowledge. It is both, subtle and gross, manifest and unmanifest, formless and multiform.[4] The *Śakti* creates, preserves, and destroys the word at the mere will of *Brahman*.[5] In other words *Śiva* creates, preserves and destroys the universe through his *Śakti*.[6]

The *Brahman* pervades the whole world and it depends upon him. All things are real with the reality of *Brahman*. He is manifested in the world[7] and he creates it through his energy (*Māyā*),[8] i.e. his *Prakṛti*. It is imbedded in *Śakti*, his supreme conscious energy. Though *Śakti* is formless, it assumes diverse forms through *Māyā*. Thus *Śaktism* combines absolute monism with the *Sāṁkhya* theory or evolution.[9]

The *Brahman*, however, can be approached not merely as the Lord *Pārameśvara*, but also as *Paremeśvarī*, the Supreme *Śakti*. For she is none else but Himself in another pose. "Thou art the *Parā Prakṛti* or *Brahman*, and from thee has sprung the whole universe. O *Śiva*, it is mother."[10] She is the matrix of all that exists : Whatever there is in this world of things, with or without motion, from *Mahat* to an atom, owes its origin and is dependent on thee.[11]

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1. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra, Kāli khaṇḍa, 2.11.
2. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 4.10.
3. Ibid. 4.14.
4. Ibid. 5.10-15, Kāli Tantra 9.22.
5. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 4.30-34.
6. Ibid. 4.23-27.
7. Ibid. 5.195.
8. Ibid. 14.127; 4.34; 5.19.
9. Sinhā (J.N.), A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 746.
10. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 4.10.
11. Ibid. 4.11.

It is said in the *Tantras* that for the help of the worshippers, the good of the world, and the destruction of the *Dānavas* she assumes various forms.[1] And it goes on to prescribe the best mode of worship, a swift course of *Sādhanā* for a man to effect his liberation from ignorance ond achieve union with the Supreme consciousness, that is She. She manifests herself in various forms and sports in the richness of her creation from a million centres of enjoyment. By a progressive identification of his own consciousness with lager conciousness of the world Mother, the *Sādhaka* participates in the *Līla*, has a joy of things and in that very process of self-identification and merger grows into the nature of the Divine Mother. All the elements that make for the sustenance, growth and luxuriance of life are drawn up in their acme and used towards this fulfilment.[2]

The philosophy of the *Tantras* is a well-adopted reinterpretation of the doctrines, expounded by the *Upaniṣads*. The philosophy is highly monistic in tone[3] and the dual aspects of *Śiva* and *Śaktī* merge ultimately in an Inscrutable unity. An identity in difference or unity in diversity has been the last word of the *Tantras*. No difference has been shown here between *Jīva* and *Śiva*. *Ātman* conditioned by *Upādhis* or *Māyā* is called *Jīvā*, but becomes *Śiva*, the moment it thinks *Śivoham*.[4] (I am *Śiva*).

Ātman is freed from those accidental attributes. In the words of *Śiva* himself, a *Jīva* is entitled to eternal emancipation when he is liberated from the bondage of *Saṁsāra*, by the force of self realisation.[5] The *Tantras* have touched the keynote of the *Advaita* philosophy by accepting identity between *Jīva* and *Brahman*, and have repeatedly stated in clear terms that the highest form of *Yoga* is the attainment of unity of *Jīva* with the

1. Mahānirvāṇa T. 4.15-16
2. Pandit (M.P.), Studies in the Tantras and the Veda, p. 21-29.
3. Brahma (N.K.), Philosophy of Hindu Sādhanā, p. 292.
4. Kulārṇava Tantra, 9-42.
5. Ibid. 14.7.

supreme soul.[1]

The *Tantras* have always insisted upon the supreme importance of *Jñana*. Knowledge in its purest form is said to be the only way that leads to final emancipation. It has emphatically been asserted that *Mukti* is attainable only by *Jñāna* and not by any other means.[2] The *Tantras* have only voiced the eternal truth of the *Upaniṣads* (न च पुनरावर्तते), when they say that *Jīva* once liberated is not born again.[3] Most of the *Tantras* have exalted the supremacy of *Brahmajñāna* in unequivocal terms. The *Tantras* have recognised to kinds of knowledge, one derived from the *āgamas* and the other obtained from spiritual experience.[4] The Rudrayāmala Tantra maintains that a *Tantric* worshipper ultimately becomes the same as *Brahman* through the help of *Brahma-Jñāna*, and that there is no self-elevating religion like *Brahamajñāna*.[5]

The *Tantras* affiliated to the *Sākta* school have explained the association of *Śakti* with *puruṣa* as the basic principle of creation. The same truth has been revealed by *Śaṁkara* just in the beginning of his *Ānandalahari*[6] :—

The mysticism of *Yoga*, has also been dealt with elaborately in the *Tantras*. The object of practising *Yoga*, as conceived by *Tantrikas*, is to acquire the power of visualising the Supreme Soul within the limitations of the individual soul.[7] One who longs for *mukti* is directed to think himself completely lost in the all-pervading soul, and to a *yogin*, the world of perception vanishes into the absolute.[8]

Quite in agreement with the *Vedānta* stand of point, the *Tantras* have maintained dual aspect of *Śiva*, namely *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*. It is said further that from *saguṇa Śiva*, characterised

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1. Kulārṇava T. 9.30.
   Śaktisaṅgama Tantra, Kāli Khaṇḍa 1.117.
2. Kulārṇava Tantra 1.105.
3. Tantrarāja Tantras 36.
4. Kulārṇava Tantra 1.109.
5. Rudrayāmala Tantra.
6. Ānandalahri—1.
7. Kulārṇava Tantra 930.
8. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra, Kāli Khaṇḍa 1.130.

by *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, arises *Śakti* and from it evolves *nāda* and from *nāda* comes out *bindu*. The *Tantras* have shown a sublime ideal of spritual experience which is in a sense deffe-rent from all other forms of *Sādhanā*.

Last of all, we can sum up that the philosophy of the *Tantras* is a reconciliation of the Absolute Monism of the *Upaniṣads* and the dualism or qualified monism preached by some of the *Purāṇas*.[1]

Nature of the Tantric Sādhanā :—

The *Tantric Sādhanā* combines in it the elements of *Yoga* worships, prayer and meditation on the identity of the individual and the Absoulute.[2] The *Tantras* accepted the monisti philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*, appreciated the value of worship and prayer along with the *Bhakti* schools, and like the *Yoga* system, laid great emphasis on the intimate relations between the body and the mind.[3] They preached an easy and short method of spiritual achievement, and sought to provide persons of all grades of equipment with suitable course of discipline,[4] The *Sādhanā* contains in it, the elements of all the important forms of *Sādhanā* viz. *Yoga* and *Bhakti*, *mantra* and *Homa*, and *Jñāna* and *Karma*. All these when combined, go to show that the *Tantric Sādhanā* is the synthesis of all that was good in the various forms of *Sādhanās*, and that is why its promise to its followers, of the easy and speedy attainment of the ends, is justified.[5] The *Tantras* promise to give to the *Sādhaka* not merely liberation (*mukti*) but also enjoyment (*bhukti*), i.e. not merely final beatitude (*Niśreyas*) but also progress (*Abhyudaya*)[6] in the world.

It is through the efforts of *Sādhaka* and the grace of the spiritual guide (*Guru*) that the Serpent-power (*Kuṇḍalini-Śakti*) which generally lies dorment at the foot of the spinal column, becomes awakened and joins the Absolute, who

1. Brahma (N.K.), Philosophy of Hindu Sādhanā, p. 275.
2. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra 1.56.
3. Brahma (N.K.) Philosophy of Hindu Sādhanā, p. 83.
4. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra, 2.20-22.
5. Kulārṇava Tantra 2.21; 36.
6. Ibid. 3.96.

resides in the *Sahasrār cakra*, i.e. the highest centre of the cerebrum.[1] The word *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* is used to indicate the spiritual power of Energy of the individual human being.

The most important feature of the *Tantric Sādhanā* is that the *Tantaras* recommend the combination of *Kriyā* and *Bhāvanā* i.e. action with imagination. Here, it differs from *Vedānta* which prescribe that realisation can be had through meditation (*Bhāvanā*) alone. The *Tantras*, though declaring the unity of *Jīva* and *Śiva*, differ from the *Vedānta* school, where the *Śivatva* of *Jīva* is an established fact, while according to the *Tantras*, the *Śivatva* (absoluteness) is to be attained through *Sādhanā*.[2]

In the *Tantras*, special importance is assigned to the *Mantras*.[3] The deity is identical with the *Mantra*, which is the infallible means of liberation. The *Tantras* believe in the eternity of *mantra* and designate it as *Śabda Brahman*. The *Bīja Mantra* are not mere words, but are a concentrated thought of great power, revealed to the *Sādhaka* in the hour of his profound illumination. *Mantra Japa* is prescribed[4] for the attainment of the desired objects.

The *Tantras* lay great emphasis on *Upāsanā*, and this seems to be derived from the *Purāṇas*.[5] The worship of the deity, and the recitation of hymns in honour of the deity, forms a very important feature in *Tantras* as well as in the *Purāṇas*. The worshipper identifies himself in meditation, with the deity he worships[6] and places before himself the fully blossomed condition represented by the deity as the ideal to be realised. Here we see that according to the *Tantras*, the realisa-

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1. Brahma (N.K.), Philosophy of Hindu Sādhanā, p. 277.
2. Kulārṇava Tantra, 9.43.
3. Brahma (N.K.), Philosophy of Hindu Sādhanā, p. 278.
4. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 5.83.
5. Brahma (N.K.), Philosophy of Hindu Sādhanā, p. 278.
6. Gandharva Tantra 81.
   Śaktisaṅgama Tantra, Kāli Khaṇḍa, 8.12.

tion of the identity between the *Jīva* and *Śiva*, is the supreme ideal.[1]

The *Tantras* recognise three distinct states of *Sādhanā* viz. Purification (*Śuddhi*), illumination (*Sthiti*) and unification (*arpaṇa*), corresponding roughly to *Karma*, *Bhakti* and *Jñāna*.[2] The individual has to undergo various processes in order to purify himself. This purification is to be attained through both, *Bhāvanā* (meditation) and *Kriyā*, and through the harmonious working of both, mind and body. The real worship of *Śiva*, is only possible by oneself whose heart is also freed from all impurities. The last stage is of complete surrender. merging and unification. The *Jīva Śakti* is identified with *Śiva-Śakti*. In this stage, no worship, and no distinction is possible but there is only Bliss, eternal and Infinite.[3]

The *Tantras* are really an epitome of all the Scriptures of the Hindus, and contain within their compass almost all the special characteristics of the various forms of *Sādhanā*. If *Tantrism* prescribes actions of the most rudimentary type and seems to be very much particular about their infinite details, it again prescribes meditation on the identity of the individual and the Absolute and thus reminds us of the high transcendent philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*.[4] It prescribes different methods and rules for the conduct of life for the persons of different equipments and capacities. It distinguishes three classes of *Sādhakas* in order of merit, viz. the *Paśu*, the *Vīra* and the *Divyā*[5]. The *Paśu* is a person who has not yet attained self-control but is attempting to have the mastery over his passions and impulses while the *Vīra* is a *Sādhaka* who has attained complete self-control and does not forget himself, even in the most trying and tempting circumstances, He is not only allowed, but is definitely instructed to include such things as wine

1. Kālikopaniṣad.
   Śaktisaṅgama Tantra - Kālī Khaṅḍa, 1-130-131.
2. Brahma (N.K.), Philosophy of Hindu Sādhanā, p. 280.
   Mātṛkābheda Tantra 12.44; 3.39.
3. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra—Sundarī Khaṇḍa, 2.186-137.
4. Brahma (N.K.), Philosophy of Hindu Sādhanā, p. 290.
5. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra 1.51-53.

meat, etc. as articles of offering to God,[1] while the *Paśu* is not allowed even to touch or to have sight of those things. The method prescribed for the *Vīra* or the *Kaula* is beset with danger[2] and is more risky than the holding of a snake or clasping round the neck of a tiger. The *Divya Sādhaka* need not undergo the trials that the *Vīra* has to pass through and is allowed to take substitute of all material things in his process of worship. He does not require the help of external objects for rousing his spiritual sentiments, and the meditative mood emerges spontaneously in him. Apart from this class division of the *sādhakas*, the *Tantras* also mention the *kāulācāra*, which forms the highest stage, and which does away with all rules and injunctions of the *Śāstras*. For a *kaula*, there is neither any *vidhi* nor any *niṣedha*, neither merit nor demrit, and neither virtue nor sin.[3] Each *Sādhaka* has to follow his own line of development, according to his capacities and as suited best to his attainments.[4]

The *Tantric Sādhanā* came into prominence perhaps later than the *Purāṇas*, although some of the *Tantras* might be dated earlier than the *Purāṇas*. The philosophy of the *Tantras* served as the basis of the *Bhakti* from of *Sādhanā*, inculated by the *Purāṇas*.[5] There is so much similarity between the *Paurāṇika* and *Tantric* teachings that it seems unjustifiable to regard them as two distinct forms of *Sādhanā*. The union of *Śiva* and *Śakti* (God and Goddess) of the *Tantras* is also mentioned in the *Purāṇas*.[6] The eternal connection between *Śabda* and *Artha*, and the regarding of *Śabda-Brāhman* and *Pāra Brahman* as two aspects of the Supreme Lord, emphasised by the *Tantras*, finds expression in the *Purāṇas*. The doctrine of the identity of the

1. Mahānirvāṇa 1.57.
2. Kulārṇava 2.122.
3. Mahānirvāṇa 4.36-45.
4. Mātṛkābheda Tantra, 14.3-10.
5. Brahma (N.K.), Philosophy of Hindu Sādhanā, p. 81.
6. Śaktisaṅgama Tantra, Sundarī Khaṇḍa 4.55.
   Devī Bh. 7.15-16.

devotee is also mentioned with the deity herself.[1] In fact the *Purāṇas* and the *Tantras* preach almost the same philosophy as well as the same method of realisation and both emphasize the importance of worship and rituals. Both preach these cults of Bhakti and last of all their god is also the same.

Thus we see that the *Tantras* give us a synthesis between the *Upaniṣads* and the *Purāṇas*, by accepting the philosophy of the former and the practical *Sādhanā* of the latter.

1. Kulārṇava Tantra 9.42.

I

THE GREAT DELUSION

HEAR from me, in detail, of the birth of Sāvarṇi, son of the Sun-God, who is known as the eighth Manu.

Hear how, through the favour of Mahāmāya, the illustrious Sāvarṇi came to be a son of the Sun-God and also the ruler of a Manvantara.

In Svārocīṣa Manvantra, of yore, there was a king, by the name of Suratha, of the line of Caitra. He gave protection to his people and treated them as his sons. Kings that misruled Kola became his enemies. Though Suratha attacked them with a mighty force, he was defeated by the chiefs of Kola. He came back to his own kingdom, only to be attacked in turn by his powerful enemies. In his own kingdom also, wicked and powerful ministers robbed him of his treasure and drew away his army. Deprived of his kingdom, the king rode alone on horseback into a dense forest. He saw the hermitage of the sage Medhas, where his disciples added to the beauty of the place and where even the wild animals looked mild. Hospitably received by the sage, he sat down for some time and then wandered about round the hermitage. Carried away by tempting thoughts, built on my-ness,' he reflected in his own mind :

"My kingdom was well ruled by my father. I have now left it. Do my wicked and treacherous servants rule the kingdom now with righteousness ? My redoubtable chief elephant, always exuding juice from his temples, is in the hands of my enemy. Is he getting proper food ? Those who faithfully served me and to whom I showed favour and gave wealth and food, are urely now serving other kings. I stored my wealth with diffieulty; but, the usurpers have no control over their expenditure and my treasure will soon run out!'

The king was thinking over these and other matters when, in that hermitage, he saw a vaiśya (a trader).

"Who art thou ?" asked the king, "What has brought thee here ? Thou lookest sorrowful as one with a troubled mind. How is this ?"

The vaiśya replied :

"I am a vaiśya by the name of Samādhi. I was born in a rich family. I have been robbed by unrighteous and greedy sons and wives. They have taken away my wealth and forsaken me. My friends have also deserted me. Unhappy, I have come to the forest. Here, I do not know the welfare or otherwise of my sons, wives and friends. I do not know what they are doing or how matters are going with them—ill or well.

The king said :

"Greedy sons and wives have turned you out for the sake of your wealth. How is it that affection towards them still binds your mind ?"

The Vaiśya replied :

"It is even as you say about me. But my mind does not acquire hardness. What shall I do ? Though through greed, my people have forgotten paternal affection, love of husband and friendship, my mind turns in all love to them. O high-minded one ! I seem to know, yet I do not know why my mind is drawn in love towards unworthy friends. For their sake, I have this long-drawn breath and troubled mind. Though they are unkind, my mind is not hard towards them. What can I do ?"

The two then went together to the sage. They saluted him in due form and after suitable exchange of greetings took seats and talked to him.

The king said :

"O holy one ! I wish to ask you a question. Be good enough to give an answer. Because my own mind cannot

find a reply, it is getting troubled. Though I seem to know yet as an ignorant man, I am feeling 'my-ness' towards my kingdom and all that constitutes my kingdom. What is this? This vaiśya has been forsaken by his sons, wives and friends. He has been cast away by his own people. Yet his heart turns in love towards them. So are we two, he and I much troubled in mind. We find fault in obejects. Yet we are drawn towards them in mind, through, a sense of 'my-ness'. O illustrious sage ! though this vaiśya and I seem to know, yet we are blind to what causes this delusion."

II

THE GODDESS OF DELUSION

THE Sage said :

All beings have knowledge of the objects of perception. But the object varies, O great one, according to perception. Some beings do not see at day time, some do see at night, and some see both during day and night. It is true that men have knowledge. But they are not the only beings that know; for animals, birds and others also know. The knowledge of men is the same in essence as the knowledge of animals and birds. In other things, also, they are equal. Though the birds have knowledge, and they know that they are very hungry, see with what devotion they put the food-grains into the beaks of their young ones. This is because of delusion. Men, O King, are full of desires. But do they deal with their sons, in greed, with an expectation of reward ? Do you not realize this ? Though all beings seek their own pleasure, yet the Preserver must preserve all, and by the power of His Mahāmāyā all beings are thrown into the whirlpool of 'my-ness,' into the hollow of delusion. Who will make sacrifices for others, if others are not drawn to them as their own through Mahāmāyā or the Great Will, the Plan of God ? Innumerable trusts are thus created through family bonds, and innumerable beings are preserved in their infancy, helplessness, and danger. Do not wonder, O King ! for, that Mahāmāyā or the Divine Will that carries the Divine Plan even brings sleep to the Creator of worlds, when the time for Dissolution comes, by the Law of Periodicity. She is Yoganidrā (or Sleep, which is a state of Yoga, when the worlds vanish away and Īśvara is all unto Himself). What wonder the whole Universe is kept in delusion by Her ? She, the great Goddess, attracts the

mind of even wise men, by force as it were, and throws it into the whirlpool of delusion. She draws all this Universe, all that moves and all that does not move, into the current of creation (which means the coming down of the spirit link after link, to reach the lowest level of materiality); and it is She that favours men, when pleased with their work, and liberates them (from the folds of creation). She is the Supreme knowledge, the Eternal Cause of liberation and of bondage too, the Ruler of all Rulers".

The king said :

"Who is that Mahāmāyā, O Holy one ? Whence does She come ? What is Her work ? What is Her nature ? What is Her form ?"

The Sage replied :

"She is Eternal. The Universe is Her form, She pervades all this. Yet Her appearance is various. Here all that from me. When She manifests herself to give a favourable turn to the work of Devas, She is said to appear, though She is really Eternal."

III

THE AWAKENING

Madhu and Kaiṭabha

HENCEFORWARD, the Sage unfolds the Great plan, as it works out in the Universe. One Plan of Evolution is worked out in one Day of Brahmā, divided into fourteen Manvantaric periods. Then there is the period of rest, sleep, and destruction.

Viṣṇu was sleeping at the end of the Day of Brahmā. The Universe had melted down to a mass of uniform Ocean. The germs of life of the previous day, collectively called the Śeṣa or the Remnant, (in the form of a serpent) formed His bedding. Or the latency of life was over-souled by Him.

At that time, two fierce Asuras Madhu and Kaiṭabha, born of Viṣṇu's ear secretion, were intent upon killing Brahmā.

There are three tendencies running through manifestation — positive, negative and the harmony of the two : in other words Rajas, Tamas and Sattva. Rajas is action, Tamas is inaction. Rajas is motion, vibration, activity. Tamas is inertia, indolence, sleep. Sattva is the harmony of these two extremer and it is by that harmony that the Great Plan is worked out, and therefore Viṣṇu represents Sattva itself. He who acts against the bringing out of this harmony is an Asura, and he acts through either unregulated Rajas or Tamas in breaking or thwarting harmony. The Asura is therefore an Asura of Rajas or an Asura of Tamas. Viṣṇu works through Life and Death in His Great Plan. Life represents Rajas, and Death Tamas, and it is through Life and Death harmonised under one scheme that evolution goes on and works out the Great Plan. The Life and Death of Universe and of the worlds alternate with each other, ond Viṣṇu holds the balance between the

two. The period of Pralaya must be followed by the period of Creation and Preservation. Otherwise the Great Plan cannot be carried out. But the Great Plan is carried out always in the midst of opposition and by mastery over the opposing forces. The forces opposing the processes of Creation and Presrvation are the Asura of Tamas and the Asura of Rajas. Madhu or spiritual Lull is the Asura of Tamas, and Kaiṭabha or active persistency in that Lull and opposition to its disturbance is the Asura of Rajas. Madhu, literary honey, is used in the Upaniṣads in the sense of spiritual immortality or spiritual bliss. Creation is the descent of spirit into matter. Brahmā the Creator of the system, represents the process of Creation, and the two Asuras, Madhu and Kaiṭabha, are always attempting to kill Him.

Located on the lotus bud that rises from the navel of Viṣṇu, Brahmā (or the creative agency of the plan) saw the two Asuras, but Viṣṇu was asleep. So with one-pointed devotion He adored Māyā, now in the form of sleep (Yoga-Nidrā), for the awakening of Viṣṇu. She, the Great Goddess, that can keep and destroy the Universe, now appeared as 'Sleep in the eyes' of Viṣṇu.

"O Great Mother !" said Brahmā, "Thou art Svāhā (the Energy of Devas) ! Thou art Svadhā (the Energy of Pitṛs) ! Thou art Vaṣaṭ (the emblem of sacrifices) ! Thou art Svara (Vedic accent) ! Thou art Sudhā (nectar) ! Thou art unchanging and eternal. Thou art three parts of Praṇava and the esernal (fourth) represented by the half- measure (ardha-mātrā) especially that which cannot be uttered (or rather measured and whcih is therefore called A-mātra or measureless in the recital of Praṇavo).

a-kāro Bhagavān Brahmā
u-kāro Viṣṇurucyate /
ma-kāro Bhagavān Rudro-
pyardha-Mātrā Maheśvarī //

'a' in Praṇva is Brahmā, 'u' is Viṣṇu, 'ma' is Rudra or Śiva Ardha-mātrā or half-measure (represented by Bindu)

is Maheśevari. In Vedāntic language, this Ardha-mātrā is the Unmanifested Brahman.

"Thou art Gāyatri, O Goddess ! Thou art the Supreme Mother ! all this is sustained by Thee. This universe is created by Thee. Thou does uphold it, O Goddess. and Thou dost eat it up at the end (or Pralaya). O Universe-bodied ! Thou art identified with the creation, the preservation and the dissolution of this Uuiverse. Thou art the Great Wisdom (Mahā-Vidyā), the Great Māyā (Mahāmāyā), the Great Intelligence (Mahā-Medhā), the Great Memory (Mahā-Smṛti), the Great Delusion (Mahā-Mohā), the Great Deva—Energy (Mahā-Devi), and the Great Asura-Energy (Mahā-Āsurī).

"Thou art the Cause of all manifestation, by energising the three Guṇas. Thou art the Night of periodicity, the Great Night, and the indomitable Night of Delusion. Thou art Śri (the Energy of Preservation), Thou art the Ruler (Īśvarī), Thou art Modesty (Hrī), Thou art Buddhi or Clear Vision. Thou art Bashfulness (Lajjā), Nourishment (Puṣṭi), Peace (Śānti), and Forgiveness (Kṣānti). Thou art fierce with sword, spear, club, disc, conch, bow, arrow, iron-bar and other weapons.

"Thou art the most pleasing of pleasing things and most beautiful to look at. Thou art the Greatest of the Great, the Supreme Īśvari. O Thou, the Soul of all ! whatever exists in the present or future, here or elsewhere, visible. Thou art the Śakti of all. What more can I say in Thy adoration?

"Thou has put even the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of this Universe to sleep. Who is able enough to adore Thee ? Thou has caused even Me, Viṣṇu and Śiva to take bodies. Who in all this universe can adequately speak of Thee ? Put the two Asuras, Madhu and Kaiṭabha, to delusion now, Wake up Viṣṇu, the Lord of the Universe, and rouse Him to kill the Asuras."

Thus adored by Brahmā, the Goddess of sleep, full of Tamas in Her nature, withdrew Herself from every part of Viṣṇu's body and appeared before Brahmā. The Lord of the Universe. being released by Her, rose from His serpent bed on

the unbroken sea and found the two powerful Asuras, Madhu and Kaiṭabha, preparing themselves in anger to eat Brahmā. Viṣṇu then rose up and fought with them for five thousand years, with His hands as the only weapon.

Mad with power, these two Asuras. came under the delusion of Mahāmāyā. and they arrogantly desired Viṣṇu to ask a boon from them.

Viṣṇu said—

"If you are pleased with Me, give me the boon that both of you shall be killed by Me to-day. There is no need for any other boon."

The Sage said :

"The deluded Asuras found that was all water at the time. So, addressing the Lotus-Eyed, they said : "Kill us where there is no water in the worlds."

The Lord, bearing conch, disc and club, said : "So let it be." He then placed the hands of the Asuras on His thighs and cut them off with His disc.

IV

THE ASURA MAHIṢA

In the Great Plan, the three worlds are knit together, for carrying out one definite portion of that Plan. Those worlds are Bhur, Bhuvar and Svar—the Physical, the Middle or Emotional, the Heavenly or Mental. Devas and Asuras are the ordinary dwellers in the heavenly world, which is the Highest of the three worlds. The Plan is worked out from time to time, through a battle between Devas and Asuras. The victory or predominance of one party or the affects the three worlds. Devas work for harmony, co-ordination and co-operation. Asuras pull back the work, acting through Rajas and Tamas, and bring about disunion, disruption and separation.

Sage Medhas speaks of the mission of Mahāmāyā, or Caṇḍī, in keeping Devas against Asuras in their struggle to bring harmony for the working out of the Great Plan. The struggle gives might, resource, power and tenacity, without which evolution cannot proceed on firm and steady lines.

The process of creation brings down spirit into matter, involving it in gradually more and more materialised bodies, till the mineral stage is reached. Then there is an ascent to the stage reached on the previous day of Brahmā, in the Worlds that are reborn in our Day or Kalpa.

That ascent begins when Mahāmāyā is born as the daughter of Himālaya, the mighty mineral king. But Medhas is not concerned with relating that part of Mahāmāyā's work.

From the mineral stage, the evolution of life goes on gradually in greater and higher complexity and organisation to he vegetable and then to the animal stage. Then comes, through the ordinary process of nature, the animal-man stage, represented by the Asura, called Mahiṣa or buffalo. The buffalo is the vehicle of Yama, the ruler of the Astral World. He has the unregulated, wild emotions of the animal, and these have now to be controlled by the discriminative faculty

of the mind. He is half man and half animal. This is, so to speak, the buffalo stage in human evolution.

Buffalo, the Asura, will not allow the reasoning power to develop in Man and will thwart all efforts of Devas to help that development.

Once upon a time, Mahiṣa was the king of Asuras and Purandra was the king of Devas. They fought with each other for full one hundred years. The Asuras defeated Devas and Mahiṣa became Indra, the king of heaven. The Devas, headed by Brahmā, went to Śiva and Viṣṇu and told them how they had been worsted in battle, what the Asuras did, and how Mahiṣa had taken up the place of Sūrya, Indra, Agni, Vāyu, Candra, Yama, Varuṇa and others. Driven out of heaven they were compelled to wander over the Earth like ordinary mortals. Devas asked Brahmā and Viṣṇu—would not they take pity on them and find out means to kill Mahiṣa.

V

MAHĀMĀYĀ—THE UNITED LIGHT OF DEVAS

THE words of Devas put Viṣṇu and Śiva to anger, And a fierce lurid light came out of their mouths as well as out of the mouth of Brahmā. So light came out of the bodies of Indra and other Devas. All that light united and became one. It was a huge mount of light, throwing flames on all sides. That united light coming out of the bodies of Devas grew into a female form, illumining the three worlds.

The light that came from Śiva made Her face, that from Viṣṇu made Her hands, that from Yama made Her hair, that from Moon made Her breast, that from Indra made Her waist, that from Varuṇa made Her thighs, that from Earth made Her buttocks, that from Brahmā made Her feet, that from Sūrya made the toes of her feet, that from the Vasus made the fingers of Her hands, that from Kubera made Her nose and that from Prajāpati made Her teeth. The light from Agni made Her three eyes, that from Dawn and Twilight gave Her eye-brows and that from Vāyu gave Her ears.

The joy of Devas knew no bounds, when they saw the Goddess born of their united light i.e. Energy.

Śiva gave Her a trident like His own. Viṣṇu gave Her the counterpart of His own Cakra. Varuṇa gave the conch, Agni the missile named śakti. Vāyu gave bow and arrow, Indra gave vajra and bell. Yama gave daṇḍa, the Sea gave the noose. Brahmā gave rudrākṣa beads and the ascetic's water-pot; the Sun put his rays into every hair cavity; and Death gave the sword and sacred skin. The Ocean brought out glittering jewels and ornaments for Her body. Viśvakarman gave Her weapons of sorts and powerful amulets. The Himālyas gave her a lion to ride upon and games of sorts.

Kubera gave Her a drinking pot. The Śeṣa gave Her a necklace set with gems of immeasurable value.

Thus armed and adorned, the Goddess sent forth a loud cry that filled all space, and the echo reverberated with terrible noise, striking terror all round.

"Victory to Thee !" exclaimed Devas. The Sage adored Her, with all humility.

Asuras wondered what the tumultuous uproar meant and came out in large numbers, armed for battle.

The strength of Devas lay in their unity and co-operation, and however inferior they might be individually, to the Asuras, they were all united to serve the Great Law the Great Plan. They sacrified and surrendered themselves to carry out that Plan, and the Power of Divinity was behind their effort. Mahāmāya represented that Power for them.

VI

THE BATTLE, THE END OF MAHIṢA

"Ah! What is this?" cried Mahiṣa in anger, and he rushed forward with his forces in the direction of noise.

He saw before him the Great Goddess, shining with dazzling light. the earth trembling under Her feet, with crown piercing the heavens, the noise of Her bowstring vibrating even in the lowest Pātālas, Her thousand hands spread all over the sides.

The battle began. First came the Asura generals, Cikṣura and Cāmara, with thousands of horses, elephants and chariots. Then came Udagra and Mahāhanu, Asiloman and Vāṣkala, and Viḍālākṣa. Thousands and thousands of Asuras joined them. Mahiṣa led the rear with millions and milions of elephants, horses and chariots. They hit Caṇḍī hard with all their weapons. But the Goddess cut the weapons asunder as in sport and hurled forth her own. Her face showed no signs of perturbance. The lion she rode shook his mane in anger and ran amongst the Asuras like fire through a forest.

The breath that came out of the Goddess turned into hundreds and thousands of Gaṇas (hosts of demi-gods, said to be attendants of Śiva). Energised by Devī, they also fought for Her. They beat the drum and blew the conch and made a great uproar. Then the goddess killed hundreds of Asuras with Her weapons. Some fainted on hearing the noise of Her bell. Some She drew up by the noose. Some She cut off by the sword. Some were crushed by the stroke of her club. Some whose heads had been cut off, rose up again and began to dance in tune with the music in the battle-field. They took up weapons again and began to fight.

Cikṣura fell first, then Cāmara, then Udagra, then Vāṣkala, then Tāmra, then Andhaka, then the three Mahāhanus, then Viḍālākṣa, then Durdhara, and Durmukha.

Thus the generals fell, one by one, and the Asura forces became thinner and thinner.

Mahiṣa grew furious. He fell upon the spirit hosts, thinning their numbers and rushed towards the lion. Caṇḍi tied him up by the noose. The buffalo changed his form into that of a lion. Caṇḍi held up the sword to cut off his head. The Asura changed into a man with sword in hand. Caṇḍi cut his body. He became an elephant, and Caṇḍi cut of his trunk. He became a buffalo again and rushed about the worlds. Caṇḍī then took a respite and began to drink the best drink.

She began to smile, while the Asura madly and wantonly rushed forth, bellowing all the time, throwing up rocks at the Goddess. She crushed the rocks with spears and said : "O fool, roar while I drink. Soon Devas will roar as I destroy you". Caṇḍī then pressed his throat with Her feet and pierced his breast with Her spear. Thus pressed, the Asura came out half man and half animal. At once the Goddess gave the final strock and cut off his head with Her mighty sword. There was deep lamenation amongst the surviving Asuras, who all fled away. The joy of Devas knew no bounds.

The Mahāmāyā is called by several names, Caṇḍi or, Caṇḍikā the Fierce in Battle: Śiva, the wife of Śiva; Devī, the light of the Logos; Īśvarī, the Female aspect of Īśvara; Ambikā, the Great Mother and Jaganmātā, Mother of the Universe.

The battle illustrates the Great occult truth that a struggle upwards from below draws a response from above. The Goddess Caṇḍi or the Divine Energy working out the Great Plan shows as much of Herself, of Her attendants, and of accessories shows as much of Herself, of of Her attendants, and of accessories as is needed to satisfy the needs of the struggle.

The struggle is for Intelligence, for the discriminating faculties of the mind; and an effort is made by race of early humanity to develop that faculty. That growing effort the Asuras seek to put down as much as it is helped forward by Devas. The opposition of the Asuras is the measure of the effort made by Devas and corresponding to that effort is the response from

above. Caṇḍī represents, on the one side, the combined Divine energy and on the other side, Divine response to the same.

Asuras represent the growing efforts of humanity. Those efforts are directed to serve the purpose of separateness which is their goal. The most powerful and most intelligent of men who are working along the path of separateness, selfishness, disunion, disintegration and disruption have the element of Asura in them, just as those who work in the opposite direction have the element of Deva.

The names of Asura generals may stand for some of the early human races, who struggled for the mind, but were in the grip of Asuras, and were only released from that grip by the apparently killing, but really saving hands of Caṇḍī.

The Cāmara may represent a sub-race with tufts of hair on the back, Udagra a sub-race with the front raisd upwards, Mahā-hanu, a sub-race with projecting cheek-bones and so on.

The Goddess, on Her part, always rides the lion, the higher emotions in man. Mahiṣa or the buffalo represents the lower passions. When these are killed or subduced, the higher emotions appear. The higher emotions include Bhakti or Devotion. When Devotion is guided by Divine Energy, it becomes powerful in subduing and sometimes killing the Āsuric nature in us.

As for Her attandants in the fight with Mahiṣa or the animal man, She had only the Gaṇas, including Bhūtas, dwellers in the astral world, or the world over the physical, known as the middle or the intermediate world.

That the Bhūtas and other Gaṇas were semispiritual agencies utilised in the early part of human development as stated in the Bhagavadgītā.

"The worshippers of Devas reach Devas. Tne worshippers of Pitṛs reach Pitṛs, the worshippers of the Bhūtas reach Bhūtas".

The Gaṇas are possibly Nature Spirits, the lowest Devas, partly emotional and partly intellectual in their nature, who were at one time friendly with men and helped human evolu-

tion. Our Scriptures make a distinction between Devas and Deva-Yonis or semi-Devas.

> Vidyādharo' psaro yakṣo rakṣa gandharva-kinnarāḥ /
> Piśāco guhyakaḥ siddho bhūto-mi devayonayaḥ //

'Vidyādhara, Apsaras, Yakṣa, Rakṣas, Gandharva, Kinnara, Piśāca, Gūhyaka, Siddha and Bhūta : these are the Deva-Yonis, or semi-Devas." These half-Devas are the Gaṇas and they are said to be the attendants of Śiva. They are called Gaṇas or collections, as they are believed to have a collective existence.

The Indriyas or senses with their inherent likes and dislikes (Rāga and dveṣa) become united with intelligence for the fulfilment of desires that grow up from likes and dislikes. And this union is a necessary preliminary to the assimilation and further development of Manas. The Goddess took the help of the semi-Devas of the middle world, to bring about union. Possibly this was the stage of higher animism in human evolution.

It was at this stage that drinking was allowed, for, perhaps, a quicker development of emotions and desire, and their flight into channels of thinking and imagining. This is the only occassion when the Goddess is said to have held the drinking- cup in Her hands.

VII

ADORATION AND THE PACT

THE Devas now approached Devī and in all humility adored Her.

"Thou dost overspread this Universe with Thy power. The power of all Devas is completely drawn into Thy form. Thou art Great Mother, worshipped by all Devas and sages. We bow ourselves in devotion to Thee. Bless us with all that is good for us.

"O Caṇḍikā none can speak of Thy power and might, not even Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Ananta. Send thoughts to us for the protection of the Universe as a whole and for the uprooting of all dangers to such protection.

"Thou art the Goddess of advancement (Lakṣmī, for those that follow the law. Thou art the Goddess of ruin (A-Lakṣmī) for those that go against the Law. Thou art Discrimination (Buddhi) in the hearts of those that have made up their minds (for the Law). Thou art Faith in good people. Thou art Modesty that comes of good birth. We bow down to Thee, O Devī ! Protect the Universe."

It will be found that in adoration, Devas think not of themselves, but of the Universe and they pray for the protection of the Universe and throw themselves into the Great Plan, in their collective unity.

"How shall we describe Thy form, that baffles imagination or Thy matchless might that undermines the power of the Asuras again and again ? Nor can we relate Thy wonderful deeds in battle, whether they relate to Devas or Asuras.

"Thou art the Cause of all this Universe. Bearing the three Guṇas in Thee, Thou art not affected by them. Even Viṣṇu, Śiva and others do not know Thy beginning and end.

Thou art the resort of all. All this Universe is but a part of Thee. Thou art the Supreme, Unmanifested Prakṛti. Thou art the Primal One.

"Thou art the word Svāhā, (with which offerings are made to Devas), the due utterance of which gives joy to all Devas in sacrifices. So for the joy of Pitṛs, Thou art called forth with the word Svadhā by men. (Offerings are made to Pitṛs with the word Svadhā). Liberation comes from Thee. What Thou art about, no one can say. The sages that seek Mokṣa or Liberation of the Spirit within meditate on Thee, by controlling well their senses, by following the true and the real only, and by purging all evils in them. Thou are Bhagavatī the supreme Vidyā."

Bhaga is sixfold consummation– comprehensive lordliness, might, fame, advancement, wisdom and dispassion. One who has this sixfold consummation is called Bhagavat. The one God of all Universes is specially called Bhagavat. In the female aspect, She is Bhagavatī.

"Thou art the Word of God, the resort of the sacred Ṛks, Yajus and Sāman, with their musical metres. Thou art the three Vedas, Thou art Bhagavatī for the protection of all worlds, and for the vocation that is carried on in them. Thou art the Great Rescuer from all dangers."

She is not only concerned with visionary liberation, but also with commonplace life as it is : for She has to guide men from the lowest to the highest step and every step is Her concern.

"Thou art wisdom based on a knowledge of all Scriptures. Thou art the boat across the ocean of births and rebirths, so difficult to cross: therefore Thou art called Durgā. Yet Thou art void of all attachment. Thy seat is in the heart of Viṣṇu and Thou art His consort, Lakṣmī. Thou art also Gaurī, wife of Śiva; and hast Thine abode in him."

To carry out the Great Plan, She has sometimes to do the work of Viṣṇu of preservation and sometimes to do the

work of Śiva or destruction. Gaurī or the White, the Beautiful has reference to Her highly spiritual nature, working on spiritual planes.

"Thy pure and smiling face, sweeter than the full moon glows with all the glitter of purest gold. "Strange is it that, even seeing Thy face, the Asura, Mahiṣa, though carried away by sudden anger, does not cease to strike !

"Stange is it also that the Asura seeing Thy angry face with eyebrows raised, like the orb of the red rising moon does not instantly give up his life ! For who can live, seeing the angry face of Death ?

"O Thou Supreme Adorable One ! turn now with favour for the work of preservation. We have seen how, when in anger, Thou dost destroy in a moment those that stand against Thee. The mighty force of Mahiṣa has just been brought to nought.

"To them that please Thee, Thou givest at all times all blessings in life. They are respected by men, Their wealth, their fame, their dharma and other objects in life do not wane. Blessed become they, their sons and other people, free from danger.

"He who is thus favoured performs every day such works as are sanctioned by Dharma (or the Great Law, the Plan) and at the end of life, through Thy favour, he goes to heaven. Thou dost thus give reward even in the three worlds.

"When in danger, the heart cries for Thee; Thou dost remove the fear of all people. When Thou art called in peace, Thou dost give such thoughts as lead inevitably to the righteous paths. Thou dost remove poverty, misery and fear. Who else besides Thee has such a melting heart, always full of compassion doing good to all ?".

"If the Asuras be killed, there will be happiness in the worlds. Let them not go on for ever on the hellish path of evil. By getting the opportunity of death in open battle, let them go to heaven" (or assimilate fully the celestial stage of evolution

and not be mere casual dwellers of heaven or occupy a lower part thereof).

The idea that the worst sins are purged by death in open battle is also to be found in the Smṛtis. Manu XI, 74; Yājñavalkya, 247.

"Surely with this idea Thou killest those that go against the Plan.

"Canst not Thau burn up all the Asuras by a mere look, that Thou should'st hold the weapons to kill them ? That even enemies may be purified by the stroke of Thy weapons and may go, thus purified, higher worlds is Thy thought; and it is a noble thought.

"That the eyes of the Asuras are not burnt up by the dazzling rays of Thy sword and the refulgent light of Thy spear is because those eyes turn also on Thy moonlike face, with its tender rays.

"Unthinkable is Thine action which is death unto the deeds of evil men. Unthinkable is Thine inimitable beauty. Unthinkable is Thy might which kills even those that over-power Devas. Unthinkable is the compassion Thou showest even to the enemy.

"Where can there be a comparison with Thy great balancing power-form, terrible to enemies; yet enchanting to others, in heart compassionate, yet stern in battle. In these three worlds, such a thing is to be found in Thee only.

"These three worlds are protected by Thee by the killing of enemies; the enemies themselves are sent to heaven by death in the front rank of battle. Our fear from the madness of the Asuras is also removed. Salutation to Thee.

"Save us, O Devi, by Thy spear ! Save us O Mother, by Thy sword. Save us by the sound of Thy bell and the hissing of Thy bow-string.

"Save us, O Caṇḍikā, on the East, Save us on the West, Save us on the South and Save us on the North by the brandishing of Thy spear.

"Those that are Thy beautiful forms in the three worlds and those that are Thy most furious forms : Save us by all of Them.

"O Mother ! Save us all round by all weapons held as twigs in Thy hand, such as sword, spear and club."

Having thus adored the great mother of the Universe, Devas worshipped Her with flowers of heaven, with incense and fragrant paste. She then adderessed them thus with a smiling face :

"Ask for such a boon, O Devas, as you desire from Me."

"O Bhagavati, Thou hast done all for us; nothing remains to be done. For Thou hast killed our enemy, Mahiṣa. But if Thou art intent, O Great Goddess, to give us some boon, pray save us from great dangers, when we appeal to Thee. Also grant that the mortal that appeals to Thee in the spirit of adoration may have always growing prosperity in wealth and men, through Thy kindness to Us."

"Be it so,' said the Goddess, and she disappeared.

Such is the Pact which is of the greatest hope for our humanity. When Devas fail to overpower Asuras, they have only to make a collective appeal and the divine Energy will come down to unite Herself with the collective Energy of Devas, and the Plan will work itself out against any odds whatsoevers,

VIII

ŚUMBHA AND NIŚUMBHA

Two Asuras, Śumbha and Niśumbha, snatched away the kingdom of the three worlds from Indra. They also carried away by force the offerings made at sacrifices. They forcibly seized the offices of Sūrya, Candra, Kuvera, Yama, Varuṇas Vāyu, and Agni. Deprived of rule and power the afflicted Devas remembered the Goddess, who knows no defeat.

"She made a pact with us, that she will remove our dangers, if we appeal to Her," so thought Devas, and they went in a body to the Himālaya mountain where they adored Her.

"Salutation to the Goddess ! Salutation to the Goddess, wife of Śiva ! Salutation to the Creative Energy ! Salutation to Preserving Energy ! Controlled in mind we offer our salutations to Thee !

"Salutation to the Energy of Rudra, the terrible ! Salutation to the Eternally Beautiful (Gaurī), who is the upholder of the Universe ! Salutation to the Dawn, the Moon, Bliss !

"We salute the Giver of blessings, of Intelligence, of Powers ! We salute the Ruin and the Rise of Kings.

"We salute Thee, O Durgā, the Liberator from endless fears, the Essence of the Doer of all things, all Renown. We salute Thee, the Dark of smoky dusk !

"We salute again and again the very limit of sweetness and fierceness ! We salute the very foundation of this Universe ! We salute the Goddess of all Action !

"She, the Goddess, who is called the Māyā of Viṣṇu in all beings, Saluation to Her, Salutation to Her, Saluation to Her, again and again !

"She, the Goddess, that dwells as Buddhi in all beings, Saluation to Her, Saluatation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again !

"She, the Goddess, that dwells as Sleep in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Saluatation to Her, again and again !

"She, the Goddess that dwells as Hunger in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again !

"She, the Goddess that dwells as Shadow in all beings. Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again !

"She, the Goddess that dwells as Śakti or Power in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her again and again !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Desire in all beings. Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her again and again !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Forgiveness in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again !

"She the Goddess that dwells in the Birth of all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Modesty in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Peace in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Faith in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, again and again !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Beauty in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, ever and ever !

"She the Goddess that lives as Prosperity in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, ever and ever !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Vocation in all beings" Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, ever and ever !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Memory in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutaion to Her, Salutation to Her, ever and ever !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Compassion in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her ever and ever !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Contentment in all beings Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, ever and ever !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Mother in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, ever and ever !

"She the Goddess that dwells as Delusion in all beings, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, ever and ever !

"She the Goddess that presides over the sense (Indriyas) and the elements (Bhūtas), and pervaders all beings at all times, Salutation to Her. ever and ever !

"She that pervades this universe as Consciousness, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, Salutation to Her, ever and ever!

"She, the Root of all that is good, was adored before by Devas, when they attained their end, and is adored every day by the Indra and Devas. Now oppressed by haughty Asuras, we, Devas, salute Thee in all devotion and humility. Thou, the Goddess that hast only to be remembered to drive off all our dangers, do all that is good for us, and put an end to our fears."

When the animalman is killed, the man of growing intelligence and discrimination passes through many stages of evolution. Each stage is necessary ; and at each stage the prompting for evolution comes from the seif-seeking aspirations of men. At each stage, the danger comes from extreme selfishness, that makes walls of narrow vision, and from persistency in the narrow outlook. The former is Rajas or Śumbha

and the latter is Tamas or Niśumbha. The forces of Sattva appear one by one, as the fight with Rajas and Tamas goes on. The Divine Energy, as identified with the collective Sattva of the Devas, takes up the fight against the Asuras, who represent Rajas and Tamas.

She fight leads to a wider and wider outlook of the Self, its gradual expansion, till the Self finds itself one with the all, and the all in itself. Asuras cling to a sense of separateness. Devas strive for a sense of union. Asuras try to subordinate the world to their separate selves. Devas try to subordinate the separate selves to the world at large and to co-ordinate all selves into a collective unity, for the highest manifestation of the Divine Life in all. In fact, Devas try to work out the Plan of God in the Universe, and are therefore helped by the Divine Energy.

This is a long process, and the fight with Śumbha and Niśumbha is a long one.

IX

KĀLIKĀ AND AMBIKĀ

While Devas were thus chanting the adoration, the Goddess went out to bathe in the waters of the sacred Gaṅgā. Addressing Devas, She said : "At this time, who is the object of your adoration ?"

The answer could not be given by Devas or their combined energy.

Out of the body of the Goddess, came the wife of Śiva and she replied :

"Overpowered by Śumbha and defeated in battle by Niśumbha, Devas have come together to pray to Me."

From the body of Her who is born of the Himālayan Mountain, Ambikā, the Great Mother, came out. She is therefore described in the world as Kauśikī.

Kośa means sheath, vehicle or body. Kauśikī is the Sheathed one.

When Ambikā came out, She, the daughter of the Himālayan Mountain, became black (kṛṣṇa). She is therefore called Kālikā, or the Black, and Her abode is the Himālaya Mountain.

The Himālayas represent the Mineral Kingdom, which is the starting-point in the path of evolution that leads to human kingdom. Up to the human stage, the evolution is, from below, upwards. We are carried forward to that stage by forces that are generated within us and amongst us, by the action and reaction of the three Guṇas, guided by the influence of Devas that work around us in nature. When we become men, we have each of us in our own nature the Divine as well as the Asuric element. The fight goes on within ourselves, between the two elements, on a line with the fight that goes on between

Devas and Asuras in heaven. What is said in the *Caṇḍi* can be applied both to the fight below as well as to the fight above. Amongst men, as well as amongst Devas, harmonious combination gives rise to an energy which becomes by itself the harmony producing Divine Energy. This is potent enough up to a certain stage in evolution. Then comes a stage, when the Divine Energy must separate Herself from the combined energy of individuals and must appear as an Energy by Herself coming from above, the Energy coming from Śiva, the Mother, who sends Her blessings and compassion below.

In the individual man, this separation is represented by the separation of Higher Self from the lower self, so that the Higher Self may bring its influence to bear directly upon the lower self, from its own higher standpoint.

The Kaṭha Upaniṣad says, this body is a chariot. Ātman rides in the chariot; Buddhi is the driver; Manas the reins; and the senses are the horses. When Buddhi holds the reins, as it should do, the Higher Self works. When the senses lead Manas and there is no control by Buddhi, the lower self works. The path of evolution leads to a greater and greater control by Buddhi, till it is free to represent the pure Ātman or Divine Ray in each of us, uncontaminated by the limitations of the lower self.

In another sense, the separation symbolises the separation of Parā Vidyā from Aparā Vidyā; or of transcendental Supreme Wisdom, which transcends the three Guṇas from Wisdom acting with the help and by the agency of the Guṇas. Parā Vidyā speaks from the standpoint of Unity, from the standpoint of Brahman, One without a second. Aparā Vidya works in the midst of diversity, recognising differences, yet pointing leading to the One. For the working out of the Great Plan, Parā Vidyā and Aparā Vidyā must work hand-in-hand, each having Her sphere of work.

When Devas cried out for help, the Goddess, hitherto working as the Evolutionary Force in the midst of diversity,

through many life-kingdoms, pertinently asked whom they now sought after for an effective fight with the present Asuras. Devas not knowing Parā Vidyā as yet, could not be expected to say what the form of divine Energy was most needed for their present fight. So she came out Herself as Parā Vidyā, the Supreme Wisdom, and gave the reply.

Relatively to Her, Aparā Vidyā looked black and was called Kālikā or Kālī.

The word Kālikā has also reference to Kāla or periodicity. The Evolutionary Process has intimate connection with the Law of Periodicity, which brings in moulds and ends all differences.

At the foot of the Himālayas stands the temple of Kālikā; and the place is named after Her, and is known in an abbreviated form as Kalka, (the Railway station at one end of the Simla-Kalka line).

Ambikā is also called Gauri, or the White, to distinguish Her from Kālikā, or Kālī, the Black. She is also called Caṇḍikā or the Furious, in Her fight with the Asuras.

X

THE VISION

Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, spies, of Śumbha and Niśumbha, saw Ambikā, wearing a most enchanting form. They carried the news to Śumbha. "O Great King, there is an exteremely beautiful girl, illumining the sides of the Himālayas. No one has seen such beauty before. Find out who this Goddess is and then take Her as thine. She is a jewel amongst women, perfect in form, sending Her glow all round. It is meet Thou shouldst see Her. Thou hast the best of elephants and horses and other things; all gems and jewels in the three worlds are at Thy house. Thou hast from Indra the elephant known as Airāvata, the horse, Uccaiḥśravas, the tree known as Pārijāta. Brahmā had the beautiful chariot, drawn by swans (Haṁsa); it now adorns Thy palatial grounds. Thou hast Mahāpadma, the king of jewels from Kuvera. The Ocean King has given Thee Kiñjalkinī, the garland of neverfading lotus. Varuṇa's umbrella is Thine, which yields gold at times. Even the chariot that formerly belonged to Prajāpati is Thine. Thou hast snatched away the power of Yama that gives ascent. In the hands of Thy brother Niśumbha are the noose of Varuṇa and the pearls and precious stones of the seas. Agni gave Thee pair of cloths, purified by him. Thou hast all precious things, why then dost Thou not possess Thyself of this auspicious looking jewel in the form of woman.

Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, one rājasic and the other tāmasic, who are always on the watch for something new and attainable for their masters, have a vision of the Spiritual Beauty of Divine Wisdom. They do not know how to express in words to their Master, Śumbha this Divine Beauty. It is so different from the beauty of all the best things of the three worlds. They only relate those things to give some idea that what they saw was quite different from what they had hitherto known.

XI

THE VOW

Hearing the words of Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, Śumbha sent the great Asura, Sugrīva, as a messenger to the Goddess.

"Go and speak such and such words to Her on my behalf, that She may be pleased and come to me soon," said Śumbha.

Sugīrva went over to the mountain side where the Goddess was, and spoke in sweet words to Her.

"O Devi ! Śumbha, the king of Asuras, is the great god in the three worlds. I have been sent as a messenger by him to Thee. His words are commands to the Devas. He is the victor of all Devas. These are his words to Thee : 'All the three worlds are mine, Devas are under my orders ; I pertake of the sacrificial offerings, to whomsoever made. All the best things in the three worlds, such as Airāvata and others, are under my control. Devas got the wonderful horses, Uccaiḥśravas, at the churning of the Milk Ocean. I snatched away that vehicle of Indra who had to lower his head in giving it up. Whatever things of surpassing beauty and value there are amongst Devas, Gandharvas and Nāgas, they are mine. Thou are a gem amongst women, O Goddess and we think it is so. Come to us, therefore, who have the right to enjoy all gems. As Thou art a gem, come to me or my brother Niśumbha of great might, as Thou wilt. By accepting me as Thy husband, Thou shalt gain untold wealth and power. Think over this and accept my hand in marriage."

Hearing this message, She that upholds this Universe, the Unknowable, All Powerful All Merciful Goddess, smiled to Herself and broke forth as follows in musical tones :

"All that you have said is true. Not a word is false. Śumbha is the ruler of the three worlds. Niśumbha is also alike to him. But in this matter I have made a vow. How

can I set it at nought ? Hear the vow that I made before, out of folly—'He who will conquer Me in battle, he who will break My pride, he who is My match in world in strength shall be My husband.' Therefore let the great Asura Śumbha come here, or Niśumbha, and speedily gain My hand by defeating Me. There is no need for delay."

The Messenger said :

"Arrogant Art Thou, O Devi ! But Thou shouldst not speak thus in my presence. In all the three worlds, who can stand before Śumbha and Niśumbha ? What of them ? The Devas cannot stand before Asuras. How then could'st Thou, a woman, and here alone. Indra and other Devas could not stand in battle before Śumbha and Niśumbha. Therefore, hear my advice and go to them. Do not wait till Thou art drawn away by the hair and Thy pride is melted away."

The Goddess said :

"True, such is the might of Śumbha and of Niśumbha. But what can I do ? When I made the vow before, I did not think over it. Therefore you go with all respect from Me and tell the Asura chief all that I have said. It is for him to do what he thinks proper."

What does all the material grandeur of the three worlds avail before the Divene Energy, the Divine Wisdom, who has now separated Herself from the Energy permeating the three Worlds. She is beyond the three worlds, where the three guṇas rule all the individuals. She reveals in Herself, Divine Will, Divine Knowledge and Divine Action. She stands in all the nakedness of the Great Plan and She is that Plan Herself. Selfiseness must be killed. Individuality must surrender itself to universality. The little individual plan must merge itself into the Great Plan. That Plan requires power built upon sacrifice and surrender, power immeasurably greater than mere material strength which is built upon grasping and gratification. It is that power of which the Upaniṣad speaks when it says : "This Ātman is not attainable by one without power."

Vidyā is gained to the extent of one's power built upon sacrifice and surrender, and to the extent to the Great Plan

that is assimilated thereby. Devas acquire Vidyā, each according to his capacity and to the mission he has in working out the Plan.

The highest, all-embracing power is that of Śiva, and in Her full from the Divine Energy is the wife of Śiva. For Preservation, She comes down to be the wife of Viṣṇu. For Creation, She comes down to be the wife of Brahmā. All energies are Her Manifestations. She is all Vidyā and all Śakti.

Śumbha and Niśumbha cannot conquer Her by their material strength, which is so far below the highest power that she represents, Each effort of Śumbha and Niśumbha and their generals to come into close contact with Ambikā drew forth, in the fight, a corresponding energy in her for the good of the worlds. Thus the progress went on in human evolution towards Theosophy, Brahma Vidyā, Divine Energy or Mahāmāyā. It is a continual trial of strength. The measure of success is the measure of power developed. The full Divine Energy responds only to the power of Śiva.

Such is the vow of Ambikā and it is never to be broken.

XII

DHŪMRA-LOCANA

HEARING these words of the Goddess, the messenger become highly incensed and, approaching the Asura King, related every word that She had said. The king in anger called out the Asura Chief, Dhūmra-Locana. (One with dusky vision, capable of having a vague perception of things spiritual.)

"O Dhūmra-Locana, go thou soon, with thy troops, and bring by force this wicked woman, snatching her by the hair. If any one comes up to save her, he is to be instantly killed, be he a Deva, Yakṣa, or a Gandharva."

So went forth Dhūmra-Locana with sixty thousand Asuras. Seeing the Goddess on the sides of the Himālayas, he shouted : "Come to Śumbha and Niśumbha. If you do not do so of your own free will, I will carry you off by force, drawing you by the hair and making you an object of pity."

The Goddess replied :

"The Asura king has sent you. You are powerful yourself, and have a mighty force with you. What can I do, if you carry Me away by force ?"

The Asura chief then ran towards Her Ambikā uttered *Hum* and this burned him to ashes.

Hum produces vibration, which clears up the vision by destroying impurities. Dhūmra-Locana is muddle-headed, with dull understanding and with slow vibration in his nature. It required the stimulus of quick vibration to work him up. *Hum* offered the quick vibration. It represents the stage of Mantras or words having regulative potency over vibrations

in our several bodies. Mahiṣa drew out the Animistic stage in Evolution, Dhūmra-Locana the Mantra stage.

The Asura forces in anger hurled forth a shower of spears and other weapons over and round Ambikā.

The lion shook his mane, made a loud noise and fell upon the Asura force. By slapping and biting, gnawing and clawing, the li on made an end of the fighting force.

The emotions are powerful enough to kill much of our Āsuric nature both tāmasic and rājasic, especially when they rise to the height of Devotion.

XIII

CAṆḌA MUṆḌA AND KĀLĪ

HEARING of the death of Dhūmra-Locana and of the annihilation of his fighting force, brought about by the Goddess and Her lion, Śumbha became very much enraged. With lips quivering with anger, he gave orders to the great Asuras, Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa.

"O Caṇḍa ! O Muṇḍa ! Take with you a large force. Go where she is and bring her soon. Drag her away by the hair, or tie her up, or, if there be any doubt as to the result of the battle, let all the Asuras combine to kill her. When that wicked woman is killed and her lion too, come at once, bringing the dead body of Ambikā with you."

Caṇḍa and, Muṇḍa were the first to have a vision of Ambikā. Caṇḍa means furious. He goes ahead of others. He represents violent emotions, strong passions, with intellect directed to selfish ends. Muṇḍa is his counterpart on the tāmasic side.

The Asuras went forward with a complete army organisation, headed by Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa. They saw the Goddess on the back of the lion, with a smiling face, on a golden summit of the Himālayas. They then made efforts to take Her away. They raised their arms and drew near.

Then Ambikā gave a loud expression of Her anger and the anger made Her face black, with eye-brows raised. From Her brow sprang forth Kālī, terrible to look at, with sword and noose as weapons. She held in Her hand the wonderful Khaṭvāṅga (an iron club with a skull at the top). She was adorned with a garland of human heads. Emaciated in body, wrapped in a tiger skin, with expanded mouth and protruded, rolling tongue, and red, sunken eyes, she looked extremely terrible. She filled all space with her war-cry and fell in

force upon the Asura army, devouring all that came in the way. She threw into Her mouth with one hand the elephants with their front and back, drivers and their war bells. She threw into Her mouth horses with riders, chariots and drivers, and crushed them all with her teeth. She held some by the hair some by the throat, some by the leg, some by the sides; and smashed them all. She took into Her mouth the weapons hurled at Her and crushed them with her teeth. Some were killed by the sword, some by the club, and some by the teeth. Caṇḍa saw that in an instant the mighty Asura force would be annihilated. He then himself rushed tawards Kāli. Both Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa covered Her, the terrible-eyed, with shower of spears and cakras (round missiles) When the chakras entered Her mouth, they looked the sun-beams in the midst of clouds. Shining with the lustre of Her fierce teeth, set within Her dreadful mouth, Kāli sent forth peals of laughter in intense anger and with thundering noise. She raised the great sword with a cry of *Hum* (a Mantra or magical formula), and running towards Caṇḍa held him by the hair and severed his head with the sword. Muṇḍa then ran towards Her and was similarly cut asunder. The remnants of the Asura force ran away on all sides in fear.

Kāli then took the heads of Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa in her hands and approached Caṇḍikā. With roars of laughter she said : "In this war, which is a sacrifice, I have brought as a sacrificial offering to thee these two great Paśus – Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa.

(Pasu means primarily an animal offered in sacrifice. Secondarily, it means any thing offered up in sacrifice).

Thou shall thyself kill Śumbha and Niśumbha."

Caṇḍikā said :

"As thou hast brought to me Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, Thou shalt be known in the worlds as Chāmuṇḍā" (Chāmuṇḍā is a word combination of Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa).

Kāli as we have seen is an aspect of Aparā Vidyā, which leads to Parā Vidyā. She is Vidyā that seeks the little self in the first instance, but afterwards kills the little self and

merges into Parā Vidyī. This is in fact the story of the ten great Vidyās, beginning with Kālī, and ending with Kamalā which is the same as Gaurī or Ambikā. The ten stages of Vidyā are mentioned as Kāli, Tārā, Ṣoḍaśi, Bhuvaneśvarī, Bhairavī, Chinna-mastā, Dhūmāvatī, Bagalā, Mātaṅgī and Kamalā. When you have passed through five stages, the sixth is the one that cuts off her head; for that is the literal meaning of Cinna-mastā, At this stage the self is utterly abnegated.

Kālī as fighting with Caṇḍa and Munḍa is Magic in its best sense, magic that does not continue to serve the little self, but magic that acquires power and knowledge as a preparation for the higher stages of Vidyā.

What was *Hum*, or the Mantra stage developed into Magic represented by Kālī ?

XIV

ŚUMBHA AND DEVA ENERGY

Hearing of the death of Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa and of the destruction of a large part of the Asura force, Śumbha ordered all available Asuras to prepare themselves for the war. "Today let those Asuras who are divided into eighty-six clans come out fully armed and equipped. Let the eighty-four clans of the Kambus come out. So by my command let the fifty clans of the Koti-Vīryas and the hundred clans of the Dhaumras come out for the war. Let the Kālakas, Daurhṛdas, Mauryas and Kālakeyas come forward with full preparation.

Having passed these orders, the Asura king himself marched at the head of thousands of troops.

Seeing the approach of this mighty force, Caṇḍikā filled space with the twang of Her bow-string. The lion also made a great noise with was augmented by the ringing of the bells by Ambikā. But all this noise was kept down by the fierce yell of Kālī.

The Asura force surrounded the three.

At this juncture, *Śaktis* or Energies came forth from the bodies of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Kārttikeya and Indra, and they drew near Caṇḍikā. Extremly powerful they came for the ruin of the Asuras and the well-being of Devas. The Śaktis had the form, vehicle and equipments of their respective male aspects.

The Śakti of Brahmā, known as Brahmāṇi had a chariot drawn by swans and she had a rosary and the ascetic's bowl in hand.

The Śakti of Śiva, known as Maheśvarī, was seated on a bull, had a trident in hand, a garland of serpents on her neck, and the streak of the Moon adorning her forhead.

The Śakti of Kumāra Kārttikeya looked like her husband, and was seated on a peacock.

The *Śakti* of Viṣṇu was seated on Garuḍa, and had conch, disc, club, Viṣṇu's bow of horn, and a sword in her hand.

The *Śakti* of the Boar Incarnation of Viṣṇu had the body of a boar. The *Śakti* of the Man-lion Incarnation had the body of a man-lion. Even the constellations were shaken by the shaking of her mane.

The *Śakti* of Indra had a thunderbolt in her hand. She was seated on an elephant, and had a thousand eyes; she was an exact counterpart of Indra.

Then Śiva headed the *Śaktis* of Devas and addressing Caṇḍikā said ; "In love of Me let the Asuras be killed soon."

At that time sprang forth from the body of Caṇḍikā a most terrible and formidable *Śakti*, that of Caṇḍikā Herself, who came out with the noise of a hundred Śivās.

The word Śiva means both the wife of Śiva and a jackal. In an exoteric sence, the word is understood to mean a jackal. And the passage is said to indicate the appearance of a hundred jackals. The animal jackal is therefore held to be sacred to the wife of Śiva. The word however really does not mean a jackal but it means the wife of Śiva.

Let us take a general view of the whole chapter and then we shell see the significance of the word.

We have come to the stage, when black magic is giving way to communion with the Devas. The Devas are beginning to take active interest in the affairs of men. Vedic sacrifices were now introduced. The Karma Kāṇḍa of the Vedas god a firm hold on the best men of the time. Ambikā was helped in the work of fighting with Āsuric nature by the Śaktis or Energies of all the principal Devas.

The Devas identify themselves with the Great Plan and help in carrying it out. With them there is no religion higher than Truth, and Truth in fact is the Great Plan. Devas have

a direct hand in the administration of the different departments ef Nature, and their influence upon men is most potent in, bringing them into line with the Plan, as it works in the three worlds.

The Energy or female aspeet ef Devas appeared, headed by the female aspects of Brahmā. Viṣṇu and Śiva. These form the Trinity of our Solar System or Brahmāṇḍa. Māheśvarī who appeared along with other *Śaktis* was the female aspect of Śiva of our Brahmāṇḍa. But, when all the *Śaktis* come headed by Śiva (Īśāna is the word used in the text), this Śiva stands for the Śiva of the highest Trinity, forming, the three aspects of Saguṇa Brahman, The Śiva aspect of that Trinity comes, and gives His consent to the Great War that is to come and create a revolution in the evolution of humanity. The response to that aspect comes from Ambikā Herself, who represent in totality the Śakti of Saguṇa Brahman, in its triple aspect. So the Superior Śakti comes forth, with the noise of a hundred Śivās, each, belonging to a different solar system or Brahamāṇḍa —the number one hundred is only illustrative. It was the highest destructive force in the Universe. The *Śakti* of Caṇḍikā synthesised the destructive forces of all Brahmāṇḍas.

It will be interesting to know how the word Śivā, is differently interpreted in the scriptures. Śivā=Śiva+Ā. 'Ā' is a feminine affix and Śivā would ordinarily mean the wife of Śiva. Though in the Trinity, Śiva represents the aspect of Destruction, it is well understood that destruction only leads to final well-being or beatitude. Therefore the word Śiva means well-being or beatitude.

शिवा कल्याणरूपा च शिवदा च शिवप्रिया ।
प्रिये दातरि वाशब्दः शिवा तेन प्रकीर्तिता ॥

"Śivā is well-being incarnate— giver of well-being. It also means dear to Śiva. The affix 'Ā' means 'dear' as well as 'giver'. Therefore She is called Śivā."

Śivā+Ś+i+vā. 'Ś' means well-being; 'i' means the highest, also collective; 'vā' means the giver. Therefore as the Giver of the highest and all round well-being, She is called Śivā.

"Śiva means Mokṣa or final emancipation, 'Ā' means the giver. She is Herself the giver of Nirvāṇa and is therefore called Śivā".

XV

ŚIVĀ, THE MESSENGER

The Śakti that came out of Caṇḍikā, called also Aparājitā or the Unconquered, thus addressed Īśāna or the Great Śiva, with grey tufts of hair :

"O Lord ! go Thou as a messenger from Me to Śumbha and Niśumbha. To them, that are filled with too much arrogence, and to other Asuras also that have come to fight, please deliver the following message : Let Indra have the three worlds, let Devas partake of the sacrificial offerings. You, Asuras go to Pātāla, if you wish to live; but if, on account of your mighty force, you wish to give battle, then come here. Let my Śivās have the pleasure of your flesh.

As Śiva Himself was employed as a Messenger by the Goddess, she was given the name of Śiva-dūti (One whose Messenger is Śiva).

It is the same story as the deputation of Kṛṣṇa to Duryodhana. Śumbha had now arrived at a stage when the deputation was necessary. His fault lay in persisting in separateness. He might have grown to be a very virtuous person, an honourable individual in other respects. If he had only heeded the warning, his life might have been spared and a cruel war avoided. So in the case of Duryodhana, if only he had paid head to the modest of demand of Kṛṣṇa, the most bloody Kurukṣetra War might have been avoided. In the case of the former Asuras, there was no room for option. They had to be done away with, to let in much needed current of evolution.

If, however, Śambhu had only consented of his own accord to give up the supremacy of the three worlds and to abide his time in Pātāla, the purpose of the Great Plan would

have been served and the intense fight that was to follow might have been avoided. The Deva Śaktis had already been evoked to influence the three worlds; and if only Black Magic had turned into White Magic by opening the door to the Deva Śaktis a bloodless revolution might have been secured.

The Message only irritated the Asuras. They came to fiight in great anger.

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XVI

THE DEVA ŚAKTIS IN THE BATTLE

The Asuras threw all sorts of weapons at the Goddess, and She cut them all asunder, with hardly any effort whatsoever. In front of Her, Kāli went on piercing the Asuras with Her spear and crushing them with her club.

Brahmāṇi went on sprinkling water from the ascetic's water-pot. She carried, drawing away the vitality of the Asuras thereby.

Māheśvarī killed Asuras with the trident, Vaiṣṇavi with the disc and the wife of Kārttikeya with Her missile.

Aindrī (Śakti of Indra) accounted for hundreds of Asuras with her thunderbolt.

The Śakti of the Boar Incarnation tore asunder a number of them with her tusks.

The Śakti of the Man-lion Incarnation destroyed a great number with Her nails and devoured them too.

With loud roars of laughter, Chaṇḍikā caused several to fall down on the earth and She then made short work of them.

Being thus pressed and crushed in various ways by the host of wrathful Mothers (Māṭṛ-Gaṇa), the Asuras took to flight.

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XVII

RAKTA-VĪJA

Rakta means blood. Vija means seed. Rakta-Vīja means one whose seed is in blood, i.e., Kāma or Desire, the most subtle Asura in us.

Seeing that the host of Mothers forced the Asuras to fly away, the great Asura Rakta—Vija took the field himself. As soon as a drop of blood fell on the earth from the body of this Asura, there rose up from the earth another Asuras of that measure.

Our Desires have only to touch the earth and become materialised by touch with an earthly object and they get a new lease of life. Every desire brought down to the earthly plane becomes an entity by itself.

Club in hand the great Asura fought with all the might of Indra; and the *Śakti* called after Indra struck him with a thunderbolt. Blood poured forth from his body and as many Asuras of equal might sprang up as there were drops of blood. The blood-born Asuras fought in their turn with the Mothers.

Again She struck him with thunderbolt and again thousands of blood-born creatures rose up.

The Śakti of Viṣṇu struck him with a Cakra or Viṣṇu's disc; the Śakti of Indra struck him with a club; the Śakti of Kārttikeya struck him with a missile; the Śakti of Varāha struck him with a sword: and the Śakti of Maheśvara (Śiva) struck him with the trident. Rakta-Vīja in his turn struck all the Mothers with his club in anger. Though he was himself struck with all sorts of weapons, the flow of his blood gave rise to hundreds of Asuras. Their number grew so large that the worlds became filled with them and Devas began to tremble in fear.

Caṇḍikā marked the despondency in Devas and She promptly turned to Kālī and said: "O Cāmuṇḍā, open Thy mouth wide. Drink the drops of blood in all speed with Thy wide open mouth, before they have time to touch the ground, Go about in the battle-field, eating up the Asuras as soon as they are born. Thus shall this Asura (Rakta-Vīja) languish away through loss of blood. When the drops that come out are eaten up by Thee, others will not come up with fearful force."

Saying so, Caṇḍikā pierced Rakṭa-Vīja with Her spear. Kālī at once took up the blood into Her mouth. Then the Asura struck Chaṇḍikā with his club. But She did not feel the blow in the least. Much blood however flowed from all parts of Asura's body and Cāmuṇḍā swallowed up every drop that fell form any part of the body.

The Asuras that grew up out of Rakta-Vīja's blood within the mouth of Cāmuṇḍā were promptly eaten up by Her and She drank in the blood as well.

As Cāmuṇḍā went on drinking his blood. Caṇḍikā gradually brought on the end of Rakta-Vīja, with Her spear and thunderbolt, Her arrows and swords.

The Asura fell down bloodless and lifeless on the earth.

The joy of Devas knew no bounds, the Mothers danced, too, with joy.

There is no killing of desires. It is hopelessly impossible. When the desires get hold of their objects, you cannot dislodge them. But your effort should be promptly and swiftly directed with all your strength to prevent the union of desire and its object, This is best done by diverting it into Kālī's mouth. Kālī is Aparā Vīdyā, the necessary counter-part of Parā Vidyā, in the worlds dominated by the three Guṇas. She is the part of the Plan as in the three worlds. She acts in the midst of three Guṇas but directs them to the working out of the Plan of God and not to the working out of the little plan of the individual man, with his own little self as the centre.

The devouring of the drops of blood or desire by Kāli corresponds with the following verse in the Bhagavadgitā :

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।

यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय ! तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥

"O son of Kunti, whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever offerings thou makest in sacrifice, whatever thou givest, whatever Tapas thou dost perform, offer up all that to Me."

One who follows this Path of Surrender, this sacrifice of individual life to the universal Life, may have at times desires growing up in him. But the Path, the Plan kills those desires. This is the killing by Kāli of the Asuras that grow up within Her Mouth.

We need not even go so far as the Path or the Plan to divert the nascent desire from a gross material bent. Athletic exercises, healthy, pure amusments, mental intrests of a lofty character, all within the purview of Aparā Vidyā, may successfully prevent the drop of blood from touching the soil.

Rakta-Vīja was not forcibly killed. He could not be so killed. The Asura had to languish for want of material touch. It is by prompt, speedy, and active direction to lofty and elevated fields and by wideawake watchfulness that we can free ourselves from the grip of desires or Vāsanā.

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XVIII

THE FALL OF NIŚUMBHA

Śumbha and Niśumbha flew into a great rage, when Rakta-Vīja was killed. Niśumbha hurried forward with selected troops in front of him, at the back of him and at his sides.

The mighty Śumbha also came forward with his troops determined to fight with the Mothers and kill Caṇḍikā.

Weapons rained from the two brothers as from two clouds. But Chaṇḍikā beat them all off with her own and hit the Asuras hard in Her turn.

Niśumbha took his sharp sword and luminous shield and struck the lion on the head.

Caṇḍikā with Her weapons cut of the sword and the shield that was set with eight moons of gems.

The Asura then took a missile and hurled it towards Her. She cut it asunder with Cakra (Disc).

Then the Asura threw a spear and She smashed it in Her tight grasp.

The Asura struck with a club and with Her trident, She burnt it to ashes.

The Asura ran with an axe and Caṇḍikā pierced him with a shower of arrows and he fell down.

Śumbha rushed forth seated on a chariot, his eighty hands over-spreading all.

Seeing him, Caṇḍikā blew Her conch and made a loud noise with her bow-string. She also filled all space with the noise that came from the ringing of Her own bell, which struck terror into the hearts of Asuras. The lion also sent forth his great roar all over the earth, in the firmament and on all sides. But, eclipsing all, came the noise from the clapping of Kāli's hands when She sprang forth upwards.

Aṭṭhāsa was the loud inauspicious laughter that came from Caṇḍikā.

The Asuras shook with fear. Śumbha became more incensed.

"Wait ! Wait O wicked one !" cried out Ambikā; and Devas responded from above with the cry of "Victory."

Śumbha hurled forth a missile of blazing fire, furious to look at Ambikā stifled it with meteor-like-weapon.

The Asura then uttered a loud cry, which resounded in the three worlds with a great noise.

The arrows of each were thrown back by the other. Then Caṇḍikā gave the Asuras a violent thrust with Her spear and he fell down senseless.

Niśumbha rose up at the time, regainning his consciousness. He showered arrows on Caṇḍikā, Kālī and the lion. He put forth ten thousand hands and rained cakras as it were on Caṇḍikā. She, however, cut them all asunder with Her arrows. The Asura ran after Her with a club in hand and She cut it into with a sharp sword. He then came forward spear in hand. But she anticipated him and thrust a spear into his heart. From the pierced heart of the dying Asura came forth another valiant Asura and he cried out, "Wait." Ambikā laughed aloud and cut off the head of the head of the emerging Asura. He fell down to earth, dead.

Then the lion, Kālī and the Goddess devoured many Asuras. Many ran away pierced by the missile thrown by the Śakti of Kārttikeya. Many gave way under the sprinkling of charmed water by the Śakti of Brahmā. Several fell down struck by the trident of Māheśvarī. Many were crushed by the thrusts of Vārāhī. Many were torn into pieces by the Śakti of Viṣṇu. Many were killed by the thunderbolt of Aindrī.

We do not hear much of Niśumbhā in the fight, as we do not hear much of his predecessor Upasunda. For the Asura

of Tamas is not Asura of many-sided activity, But he is an Asura of conservatism, that will stick to a thing and resist all change. At this stage he may have stood for persistency in the Karma Kāṇḍa of the Vedas and for the performances of Vedic sacrifices for the attainment of heaven. His death only prepared the ground for the final revelations of the Vedas, of the Upaniṣads. Kṛṣṇa had to protest against the "Nothing else exists" spirit of His time. That Spirit is the work of Niśumbha.

XIX

THE ONE WITHOUT A SECOND

Niśumbha, his brother dear to him as his own life, was killed and his force well-nigh exterminated. Śumbha felt greatly perturbed in mind and he cried out : "O Durgā tainted as Thou art with arrogance of might, do not indulge in false pride. There is too much conceit in Thee for Thou fightest with the help of others' strength."

The Goddess replied : "One I am surely in this Universe. Who is another, My second ? See O wicked one, 'these My power are all entering into Me."

All the Śaktis, Brahmāṇī and others, instantly became merged in Ambikā and She alone remained.

Devī said :

"It is through My power that I remain in all these many forms. I have withdrawn them all. I now remain alone in the battle. Be consoled in mind."

We now reach the stage of forest discussions embodied in the Āraṇyakas. The query arose in many minds as to who was the one Deva. Inspired answers came from the intuition of Vedic Sages. The intuition is more or less in touch with the Cosmic mind and the revelation of the Upaniṣads came from that mind.

All Devas—only when functioning in the Inner government of the Worlds—are partial manifestations of one Deva—the One without a Second Who is known as Brahman in the Upaniṣads.

Brahman willed "One I shall be Many." That Will, containing within itself the whole direction of manifoldness and of its ultimate return to unity, is Caṇḍikā or Ambikā as the Divine Will. Inherent within the Will is the Wisdom that devises the Plan of outgoing and incoming in all details; that

Wisdom is Caṇḍikā as Divine Wisdom or Vidyā. There is also an inherent Power to work out tne Plan in its entirety. Caṇḍika is the Power of Creation. Chaṇḍikā is Divine Will, Divine Wisdom and Divine Energy, all centred in one without a Second. Deva Saktis are all Her manifestations. She can withdraw them and manifest them at Will, as the working of the Plan requires.

When men get into communion with Devas, who are only messengers and agents in carrying out the plan, they come into touch with the Plan itself and the communion is very helpful to them. I shall call Devas, the Host. They are agents in the working out of the Plan. The Plan requires for its carrying out three classes of agents – Manus or divine Rulers, Ṛṣis, Sages or Seers of the Plan, and Devas. As Divine Will, the great Mother manifests Herself through the Manus and other great souls belonging to the ruling class. As Divine Wisdom, She manifests Herself through the Sages, Seers and Prophets. As Divine Power, Energy or Activity She manifests Herself through Devas. Yet as Will, Wisdom and Activity all combined, She is One without a Second.

The continued fight, the continued clash with divine Wisdom, widens the vision of Śumbha, and he seeks for that unity in the midest of the Deva Śaktis, which the Vedic sages sought for in their forest deliberations. With this growing development in him Śumbha could have been spared in his life, if he had not insisted on the prevalence and supremacy of the ideals of separateness.

XX

THE FALL OF ŚUMBHA

Now a fierce fight began between the Goddess and Śumbha. The Devas and the Asuras looked, wondering. Showers of arrows, sharp and powerful weapons made the fight terrible to all worlds. They met each other's weapons with ease for some time. The Asura then covered the Goddess with a hundred arrows. She tore to pieces the bow itself with Her arrows. He held a missile in his hand, but She destroyed it with Her disc, before it could be hurled at Her. He then took a sword in hand, glittering like the sun, and a shield with hundred moons set upon it and ran towards Her. As he was About to strike, Caṇḍikā forthwith cut of the sword, as well as the glowing shield, with her arrows.

When his horses and the driver of the chariot were killed and the bow shattered, the Asura took a terrible club in hand intant on killing Ambikā. But before the club could fall on Her She shattered it with Her arrows.

Then the Asura violently ran towards Her and gave a blow with his fist. She retorted with a slap which caused Śumbha to fall down to the earth; but he soon recovered. He caught up Caṇḍikā and sprang upward into the sky with Her. Though hanging in sky without any support, She carried on the fight.

Perhaps in the region of metaphysics, which puzzles many subtle minds.

There is the sky, she came into close quarters, for the first time, with the Asura and the two fought hand to hand. The Siddhas and Munis looked with wonder on that fight.

This refers to the ages of metayhpsical discussions.

The fight went on for a long time, till at last She raised up Śumbha, turned him round and round and hurled him

down on earth. As soon as he touched the earth, the wicked Asura sprang up and ran forward to kill Caṇḍikā, with fist aised up. Seeing the Asura chief coming again, the Goddess hrust the spear into his heart and he fell down to earth dead, shaking the planet, its globes, seas and mounts.

Peace was then restored, the worlds were relieved, the sky became clear, ominous clouds and meteors disappeared and the rivers flowed in their right course.

Devas were filled with joy, the Gandharvas sang and the Apsarasos danced.

The wind blew gently, the sun shone as before, the fires tranquilly glowed and the yells in space were heard no more.

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XXI

ADORATION BY DEVAS

When the great Asura Chief was killed, Indra and other Devas came forward, with Agni in front. They adored Kātyāyani :

Kātyāyanī is another name of Caṇḍikā Ambikā or Gauri. We have already heard that Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva grew angry and each put forth an Energy for the killing of the Asura named Mahiṣa, and the combined Energy of all Devas brought forth the Goddess. This is said to have happened at the hermitage of Sage Kātyāyana in the Himālayas: and the Goddess was first adored by Kātyāyana. She is therefore called Kātyāyanī.

"O Goddess that freest Thy votaries from all dangers, be kind to us ! Be kind O Mother of all this Universe ! Be kind O Ruler of all the worlds ! O Thou the Ruler of all things moving and unmoving, uphold the Universe as a whole !

Thou art the sole support of all the worlds, for Thou takest the form of earth and again that of water to satiate all the worlds ! Thou art of unconquerable Might !

"Thou are the Śakti of Viṣṇu, of endless powers ! Thou art the Seed of the Universe, the superme Māyā ! O Goddess. all that exists is under Thy fascinating influence ! Be Thou kind on earth and be the cause of liberation (from that fascination) !

"O Goddess ! all the Vidyās (different forms of wisdom) are but Thy different aspects ! All females in all the worlds are but Thy parts ! As the One Mother, Thou dost nourish all this ! What can be Thy adoration ? For only words of eminence directed to the adored from adoration.

"While Thou art all beings Thyself, the giver of enjoyment and liberation to all, how can words of eminence be chosen for Thy adoration ?

'As Buddhi Thou art in the hearts of all, the giver of enjoyment and liberation ! O Devi Nārāyaṇī ! Salutation to Thee !

"As measures of Time like Kalā and Kāṣṭhā:

"The time taken by eighteen winkings is Kāṣṭhā and that taken by thirty Kāṣṭhās is called Kalā.

"Thou causest sequences (or changes) and leadest the worlds to their end ! O Nārāyanī ! Saluation to Thee !

"Thou art the good of all good things, O Śivā ! Thou fulfillest all purposes ! Thou Refuge of all ! O Three-eyed, O Gaurī, O Nārāyaṇī, Salutation to Thee !

"Creation, up-keep, and end come from Thy Śaktī, O Eternal ! The Guṇas are in Thee ! Thou art the Guṇas ! O Nārāyanī; Salutation to thee !

"Those who come to Thee for shelter, the afflicted, the miserable—Thou savest them all, the destroyer of the evils of all ! O Nārāyaṇī; Salutation to Thee !

"As Śaktī of Brahmā, Thou art seated in a chariot, drawn by swans (Haṁsa). Thou sprinklest water with Kuśa grass. O Nārāyaṇī; Salutation to Thee !

"As the Śakti of Maheśvara, Thou hast the trident (triśūla) (in the hand), moon (on the forhead) and serpent (on the head) and Thou hast the great bull as Thy vehicle. O Nārāyaṇī; Salutation to Thee !

"As the Śaktī of Kumāra or Kārttikeya, Thou are surrounded by peacoks and Thou holdest the great missile in Thy hand. O Nārāyaṇī; Saluation to Thee !

"As the Śaktī of Viṣṇu, Thou holdest the conch, the disc, the club and the horn-made bow of Viṣṇu in Thy hand. Be Kind, O Nārāyaṇī; Saluation to Thee !

"As the Śakti of the Boar Incarnation, Thou holdest the terrible great disc in Thy hand. Thou dost raise the Earth with Thy tusks. O Śivā, O Nārāyaṇī: Saluation to Thee !

"As the Śakti of Nṛsiṁha, terrible to behold Thou didst make great effort to kill the Asuras, for the protection of the three worlds. O Nārāyaṇī: Salutation to Thee !

"As the Śakti of Indra, Thou hast the crown on Thy head and the great thunderbolt in Thy hand and Thou dost gliter with Thy thousand eyes. Thou didst take the life of Vṛtra. O Nārāyaṇī; Salution to Thee !

"Making Śiva Thy messenger, Thou didst kill the great Asura. Terrible is Thy form ! Terrible is Thy Voice ! O Nārāyaṇī; Salutation to Thee !

"As Cāmuṇḍa, Thy mouth looks terrible with Thy teeth Thou art adorned with a garland of Asuras' heads. Thou didst kill Muṇḍa. O Nārāyaṇī; Salutation to Thee !

"Thou art Lakṣmī (the Goddess of Prosperity). Thou art Lajjā (the Goddess of Modesty). Thou art the great Vidyā. Thou art Śraddhā (Faith), Puṣṭi (Nourishment) Svadhā (the Śakti of the Pitṛs), Dhruvā (Fixed), Mahārātri (the Night of Pralaya), and Mahāvidyā (the Great Avidyā). O Nārāyaṇī ! Salutation to Thee !

"Thou art Medhā (Intelligence) Sarasvatī (the Goddess of Learning), Varā (the Great), Bhūti (the power of Siddhis, such as the power to make oneself as small as an atom), Vābhravī (the wife of Vabhru or Śiva), Tāmasī (Darkness of and Niyatā (the Inevitable. Be kind O Nārāyaṇī ! Salutaion to Thee !

"All forms are Thine ! Thou art the Ruler of all ! All Śaktis or Powers are in Thee ! O Goddess, O Durgā, protect us from all fears ! O Goddess, Salutatoin to Thee !

"Let this Thy pleasing face, adorned with three eyes protect us from all ! O Kātyāyanī; Saluation to Thee.

"Let Thy trident, fierce in the glowing sparks and most formidable, fatal to all Asuras protect us from fears ! O Bhadrakāli, Salutation to Thee !

"Let Thy bell which fills the worlds with sonorous vibration, that takes away the energy of the Asuras protect us, O Goddess, from all evils, just as a Mother protects her son !

"Let Thy sword besmeared with the blood and marrow of the Asuras, and brightened by Thy grasp, be for our good. O Caṇḍikā, we bow ourselves down before Thee.

"When pleased, Thou puttest an end to all maladies, when displeased thou takest away all objects of desire. Evil does not befall those that come under Thy shelter. They are sheltered by others too.

"O Ambikā. this ruin that Thou hast brought to-day the great Asuras, who spurned the Law, making Thine own from into many forms. who else can do this ?

"Who else is there so versed in the Vidyās (all forms of wisdom). In the Śāstras that hold out the lamp of discrimination and in the primal words (of the Vedas) ? Again who can turn round the Universe so much over the immensely dark hollow of Mine-ness ?

"Thy abode is amongst Rākṣasas, deadly serpents, hostile camps and robbers: Thou dost dwell even in the forest fire and in deep seas. But even from there, Thou dost protect the Universe.

"Thou art the Ruler of the Universe; Thou dost keep up the Universe. Thou art the Universe and Thou holdest it up. Those who become devoted to Thee in all humility are respected even by the Lords of the Universe. Thou art the Support of all.

"O Goddess, benignly look on us ! As now Thou hast saved us by killing the Asura so save us always from the fear of enemies. Take away the evils of all the worlds. Remove the dangers of natural calamities.

"Favour us, O Goddess. The people of the three worlds worship Thee. Be a giver of boons to them."

The Goddess said : "O Devas, I am the giver of boons. Ask for such boons. as you wish for in your hearts. As for the boon that will do good to the worlds, I will give it."

Devas said : "O Ruler of all, do that which will take away all obstacles from the three worlds and will put an end to our enemies".

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XXII

ŚUMBHA AND NIŚUMBHA AGAIN

Kṛṣṇa and the Goddess

In reply to Devas, the Goddess went on making prophecies as to the occasions on which She will appear to help Devas in their fight with Asuras.

"In the twenty-eighth Yuga of the Vaivasvata Manvantara another Śumbha and another Niśumbha will appear. I shall then be born at the house of Nanda Gopa out of the womb of Yaśodā. Takiag My abode on the Vindhya hills, I shall kill them both."

Yuga in the text means Mahā-Yuga, consisting of four Yugas, Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kalī. Our Kali Yuga is in the twenty-eight Mahā-Yuga. As soon as Kṛṣṇa son of Vasudeva and Devakī disappeared from our Earth, the present Kalī Yuga set in.

When the Devas, moved by the pressing entreaties of mother Earth, approached Viṣṇu, He said : I shall come down." After making the promise to Devas, He at once turned to Mahāmāyā or Yogamāyā or Caṇḍikā, the great Goddess, and asked Her to take birth in Vṛndāvana, to enable Him to fulfill the mission of his coming down. It is said in the Purāṇas, that a moment after Kṛṣṇa was born of Devakī at Mathura, Caṇḍikā was born of Yaśodā at Vṛndāvana.

The fight with the second Śumbha and Niśumbha had its counterpart below on Earth in the bloody battle of Kurukṣetra in which Kṛṣṇa took part as the charioteer of Arjuna.

We have to compare this with another Purāṇic account, specially that given in the Viṣṇu Bhāgavata.

The Four Kumārs, Sanat Kumāra and others, the foremost on our Earth, wanted access to the transcendental Vaikuṇṭha, the unchanging abode of Viṣṇu, where there is Sattva or

Harmony, pure and simple, without a trace of Rajas and Tamas. The door is guarded by two gate-keepers, Jaya and Vijaya, representing Rajas and Tamas, as completely surrendered to Viṣṇu. Without passing through their test, no one could pass within the gate of Vaikuṇṭha, and enter the holy abode of Viṣṇu. Now the Kumāras were held back by the gate-keepers and they grew wroth. "What is this difference," they cried out, "this sense of inequality in the highest world, where there should be equaility and one-ness" They cursed, the gate-kepeers as unfit to hold the gate of such a place. Viṣṇu appeared instantly there and said that all this was pre-arranged. "The course will be respected," said Viṣṇu. "The gate-keepers, Jaya and Vijaya, will go down on Earth and incarnate there three times. At the end of their third incarnation, they will come back to Me and take their place once more as gate-keepers of Vaikuṇṭhā."

In the first incarnation, they became Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu, in their second Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa, and in their third Śiśupāla and Dantavakra. They raised the banner of Rajas and Tamas so high that divine influence had to come down each time to counteract them. The measure of their opposition was the measure of the power which our humanity had to put forth, with the help of divine influence, And with each cycle, humanity was carried on our Earth a good deal forward. Varāha killed Hiraṇyākṣa and Nṛsiṁha, the Man-lion killed Hiraṇyakśipu. Rāma, the ideal Man of duty and sacrifice, had to come down to kill Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarṇa, Kṛṣṇa killed Śiśupāla and Dantavakra. With the killing of these powerful antigods, the way was made clear for our humanity to pass on to Vaikuṇṭha. The Kumāras accepted the condition for us and secured a very great privilege for our humanity.

Through the help which Chaṇḍikā gave to Kṛṣṇa, another era of human evolution was ushered in; it was the era of man's progress to the stage of superman.

The Upaniṣads were no longer a subject of speculation.

Vyāsa analysed them all into a philosophy based on One Life pervading all—that of the Pervader or Brahman. Kṛṣṇa drew upon the Upaniṣads and evolved a practical religion based upon the Unity of Life. The path from One to many reached its final goal, when the many were taught as individuals to fit themselves for normal existence in the highest of the three worlds. But Kṛṣṇa pointed out that the final goal of life was not heaven. That was the limit of Sakāma or self-entred evolution. The self had to be broken and expanded now, and another path of evolution had to be followed, which would free man from the limitations of three worlds and take him forward to the Kumāric stage of evolution and then to the Divine stage, which ultimately opens the door for Vaikuṇṭha.

The Path of "Unity to Diversity" had now no meaning for those that were in the front rank of our humanity, and the Path of Diversity to Unity was to begin." What wonder that there should be new Asuras at this critical stage of human evolution; whether they were Śumbha or Niśumbha, the Asuras in heaven, or Śiśupāla and Danta-vakra, the great admirers of orthodox, narrow Brahmanism and declamators of Kṛṣṇa and his mission; or whether they were Duryodhana and his friends and supporters who represented might as against right.

Chaṇḍika was born on Earth as the daughter of Nanda by Yaśodā at Vṛndāvana.

This was Her third birth on Earth.

First, She was born of Dakṣa Prajāpati, when She had to direct the process of Involution which led to the coming down to the mineral stage. Then for the second time, She took birth as the daughter of the mineral King Himālaya and directed the course of a forward evolution which led to the birth of humanity and then to the perfection of man as a self-centred individual. She made the Himālayas Her abode, giving sanctity to that great mountain range, which has therefore become t he seat of many monasteries and āśramas.

Now another turn was to be given to human evolution

and She was born for a third time. This time She took Her abode on the Vindhya Hills, which contain in them the germs of a future centre of spirituality. Proud of the presence of Caṇḍikā, the Vindhya mountain began to raise its head, so as to surpass the height of Himālaya. But the great Agastya prevented this. He went to the south and asked Vindhya not to raise its head till he came back. When would he do so? Evidently one Race of humanity will run its course and another Race begin its own at the time. Then there will be a great geological change. The Himālaya will go down and the Vindhya will raise up, pulling up with it a good portion of land that is now under water. Then will the Vindhya be the sacred mountain of the future Race and will be the seat of many hermitages and āśramas. At present we have a temple created to Yogamāyā at Vindhyācala, a station next to Mirzapur.

The Mahābhārata says that before the battle of Kurukṣetra began, Kṛṣṇa asked Arjuna to worship Chaṇḍikā and receive Her blessings and this he did.

Viṣṇu Bhāgavata says that for the privilege of union with the boy Kṛṣṇa, the Gopi girls had to worship Kātyāyanī for one month.

XXIII

RAKTA-DANTIKĀ

The Goddess continued :

"Again in a very fierce from, I shall come down on earth and kill the Asuras known as Vaipra-Cittas."

Pra-Citta is thoroughly and intensely intellectual. The prefix *pra* means intense or excessive. Citta is intellect. The prefix *Vi* means, amongst other things, perverse. The word Vi-pra-citta therefore means one who is intensely intellectual, but whose intellect is directed towards perverse channels. The Vi-pracittas are perversely intellectual people who use their intellect for selfish ends. and for the oppression of others. The word Vaiprachitta would mean sons of Vipra-cittas or a race of Vipra-cittas.

"I Shall eat up those great Asuras. who will be arrogant in their nature and My teeth will be coloured as red by their blood as the flowers of pomegranate.

Thenceforward, Devas in Svarga and men on Earth will call Me in their address Rakta-Dantikā' (with blood-stained teeth.

This reads very much like a prophecy of the Great European War, which has produced quite a revolution in thought. That revolution is directed against the abuse of intellect and it is likely to make the conditions for a really spiritual civilisation.

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XXIV

ŚĀKAMBHARĪ

"There will be drought for one hundred years and no water on Earth. The sages will then invoke Me by adoration and I shall appear without birth in the womb of a female. I shall then look upon the sages with a hundred eyes and people will call Me Śatākṣī or the Hundred-Eyed one. I shall bring out of My body vegetables that will sustain the lives of men till the setting in of rains once more. This will give Me the name of Śākambharī on Earth. During the period of drought, I shall kill a great Asura of the name of Durgama (the Inaccessible or difficult of attainment). I Shall therefore get another name that of Durgā."

This prophecy relates to a prolonged drought which will be a severe trial on men. It is only such strain that hastens spiritual advancement, which is not otherwise attainable. This seems to be the beginning of a new Spiritual Race.

XXV

BHĪMĀ

"Again I shall take a Bhīmā or terrible form and for the protection of the sages, shall kill the Rākṣasas. The sages shall then worship Me in all humility. I shall then get the name of Bhīmā or the Terrible."

The mention of Rākṣasas indicates a period of racial Destruction—the end of one Race and beginning of another Race of humanity. Both in this chapter and in the previous, the sages, not Devas, approach the Goddess. It seeems as if the racial development is high enough, and the intervention of Devaṣ is no longer necessary.

XXVI

BHRĀMARĪ

'An Asura named Aruṇa will throw great obstacles in the three worlds. At that time, I shall take the form of a black bee, (Bhramara), consisting of numberless (bee-bodies). For the good of the three worlds, I shall kill that great Asura. People will then call Me Bhrāmarī and they will adore Me evrywhere.

In this way, whanever opposition will come from Asuras, I shall come down and destroy the enemy".

Aruṇa means the dawn. Here it is the dawn of a new Race. The inauguration of a new Race is always beset with difficulties and much opposition. Aruṇa as an Asura represents the difficulties and impediments of the inaugural stage.

It is most interesting to know the form which the Goddess will take to remove the counteracting forces. It is the form of a black-bee, consisting of numberless bees. This means a collective body, numberless bodies organised into one body. It clearly indicates a sort of socialism, which will build up all into a collective life. Individuals will have to surrender themselves into a big collective organised existence. What the details will be, it is difficult to make out. But the word Bhramara gives another significant suggestion. The word is derived from the verb *bhram*, to roam about. The black-bee has no fixed home. He roams about and seeks honey from every flower. He is always in pursuit of sweetness and the wide nature is his field. Are we to understand therefore, that in the new Race, men will not be bound down by any fixed home or narrow family life, that they will be all drawn together by love and goodwill that men and women will seek only blooming flowers in nature and that beauty and harmony will be their only concern.

We must remember that sage Medhas was unfolding the picture of the Plan to the two friends. He stopped here. No more was needed for them, for the great preparation they had to make for becoming a Manu and a World Teacher.

It is then that King Suratha is to become the Manu of the next Race and not of the next Manvantara ? Or is it that He is to get His first experience as a Racial Manu Putra before He becomes the Manu of a Manvantara ?

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XXVII

THE GREAT PLAN

The Goddess said :

"I shall surely remove all impediments from him. who will whole-heartedly adore Me with the words that have been said above. Those that will recite the story as to how Madhu Kaiṭabha, the Asura named Mahiṣa, and Śumbha and Niśumbha were killed; and those that will hear with devotion My great deeds on the eighth, Ninth and Fourteenth days of the Moon. shall not get the pollution of sin, nor shall they suffer from the evil that arises from sin, neither shall they meet poverty nor parting from their dear ones. They shall have no fear from enemies, robbers and kings, nor from weapons, fire and water. Therefore let these deeds be read and heard with undivided attention and devotion.

"No ceremony gives so much benediction as this. All evils that arise from epidemics, evils that germinate in the body, and that come from seen and unseen causes vanish before the glory of My deeds. I shall not leave the house, where it will be always read. In sacrificial offerings, in worship, in fire ceremonies, in festivals, all My deeds are to be recited and heard. In that case, I accept the offerings and worship with pleasure, whether they are made in due form or not. Every year, My worship is made in autumn. Men will hear these deeds on that occasion with faith and they will be freed from all dangers; they will get wealth, paddy and sons, through My favour. He who will hear about My glory. My auspicious appearances and My might in wars shall be free from fear. His enemies shall be over-powered; he will be blessed with the things of the world and his family will have joy. In expiatory rites, generally, and specially in averting the consequences of evil dreams and in removing the terrible

diseases that arise from the malign influences of planets, My glory is to be heard. Then will men be free from touch diseases and will have good dreams. This will do good to children possessed with evil spirits and will bring about friendship, where there is enmity. It will weaken the evil-doers and drive away Rākṣasas, Bhūtas and Piśācas. What is more, the recital of My glory draws Me near.

"You may go on day and night, for a whole year, worshipping Me with animal sacrifices flowers, respectful welcome with rice, durvā grass, flower, sandal paste and water, incense, scented lamp light, feasts to Brāhmins, fire-offerings, baths and other luxuries. The pleasure that comes to Me may be secured by the hearing of these good deeds only once. Hear and relate how I have manifested from time to time, Your sins will be purged. You will be free from disease. You will be protected from other beings. Hear how in battle I have put down wicked Asuras and you will have no fear from enemies. The adorations that you have made, that sages Nārada and others have made, and that Brahmā Himself has made will give good understanding to men. In forests, in out-of-the-way places, in forest fires. in the midst of robbers and enemies, in desolate loneliness, when followed by lions, tigers and mad elephents in the jungle, when ordered to be killed by an angry king; when imprisoned, when in the great sea, the cyclone "captures the boat" : when on the fearful battle ground arms fall in showers; in all terrible impediments, when afflicted by pain and torment man has only to remember My deeds and he will be liberated from all dangers. My power drives away lions and other wild animals, robbers and enemies from a distance, if only My deeds are remembered.

Such is the promise held out by the Goddess; and in autumn, She is invoked in a thousand homes and temples and her story is recited. The deeds are recited whenever there is serious illness or great danger. But, as the Goddess said and real object in compelling men to recite and think over the

great deeds or the Great Plan is not protection from dangers, which is a minor thing and which may only attract those that have desires. "What is more, the recital of My glory draws Me near." That is the real aim of this great Scripture.

XXVIII

THE SAGE MEDHAS TO THE KING AND THE VAIŚYA

The sage said :

"So saying, the Goddess Caṇḍikā of furious deeds disappeared from the midst of Devas, while they were still looking on Her. Now that they enemies were killed, Devas shook off all fear, and they went back to their assigned duties as before and partook once more of their share in sacrificial offerings. When the most powerful Asura, Śumbha. of matchless might, that could over-power-all the worlds was killed. and his valiant brother Niśumbha, too. by the Goddess, the remaining Asuras went to Pātāla. The Goddess is Eternal, yet She manifests Herself again and again, O King, for the protection of the worlds. She keeps the worlds under delusion. She brings the worlds into being. When she is pleased She gives wisdom and wealth in response. When the time for total destruction arrives, O King, She pervades the Universe as Mahā-kalī, in the form of extensive Death. She is Death at the time of dissolution, She, the Unborn, becomes the creation in time. She the Eternal, upholds all beings in time. At the time of prosperity, She becomes Lakṣmī (the Goddess of prosperity) in the houses of men and gives good understanding. In adversity, She becomes A-Lakṣmī (the Goddess of adversity) for the ruin of men.

The apparent ruin is however the beginning of real blessing.

When She is adored and worshipped with flowers, incense, scent and other things, She gives wealth, sons and a mind for Dharma that brings on well-being. Thus have I related to

thee, O King, the excellent story of the glorious deeds of the Goddess. Such is Her Power. She upholds the Universe. By the Māyā of Viṣṇu. She puts forth such Vidyā or wisdom, as is needed for that upholding. Thou and this Vaiśya as well as other men, whether of discrimination or no discrimination, have been, and are, kept in delusion by Her, and will be kept so ia future. Approach Her. O King, take the shelter of that Great Ruler. When she is worshipped, She gives enjoyments or heaven and mokṣa or liberation to men.

XXIX

THE KING, VAIŚYA AND THE GODDESS

King Suratha heard the words of the great Sage and parted from him after salutation. He had been troubled in his mind through a strong sense of 'Myness' about the robbing of his kingdom. He now went out for Tapas. So did the Vaiśya. They went to a river side and meditated on the story of the Goddess, with the object of having a vision of the great Mother. They made an earthen image of the Goddess and worshipped Her with flowers, incense and fire-offerings. They fasted or had scanty food. Their mind was all centred in Her in devotion. They offered blood from their own body.

Certainly not the blood of poor, helpless animals. Those that indulge in animal sacrifices ought to take a particular note of this.

Controlled in mind, they went on worshipping the Goddess for three years. Caṇḍikā, the protector of the Universe (Jagat-Dhātri) was then pleased and appeared before them. The Goddess said : "What thou askest for, O King and what thou too, O Delight of thy race, ye shall get that all from Me. I am pleased and will give you all you want". Then the king asked for unfailing sovereignty in after lives and for the restoration of his own kingdom by the conquest over his enemies. The wise Vaiśya who had attained peace of mind by this time asked for the wisdom which dispels attachment caused by a sense of 'I' and 'Mine'.

The Goddess said :

"O King, in a few days, thou shalt get back thy kingdom. Thou shalt kill thine enemies and thy kingdom shall not slip away again. After death, thou salt get birth from the Sun

God and shalt be Manu on this Earth, and known as Sāvarṇika."

To get birth from the Sun-God is true of his nature. The Sun-God or Āditya is a sort of Logos. When a man has control over the seven rays or horses of the Sun, he may be said to have acquired the ruling power of the Sun. Every Manu is expected to have control over the rays in order to have a general control over men.

"O Vaiśya Chief, the boon that thou dost desire to get from Me, I give unto thee, for they perfectton. Thou salt have wisdom."

The king and Vaiśya began adoring Her, with devotion. She gave them what they desired and instantly disappeared.

Suratha, the Kṣatriya Chief, thus got the boon from the Goddess. He will get birth from the Sun and shall become Manu by the name of Sāvarṇi.

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Due date of return	Due date of return	Due date of return

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